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# The Young Man Four-Square

Rev. James I. Vance D.D.

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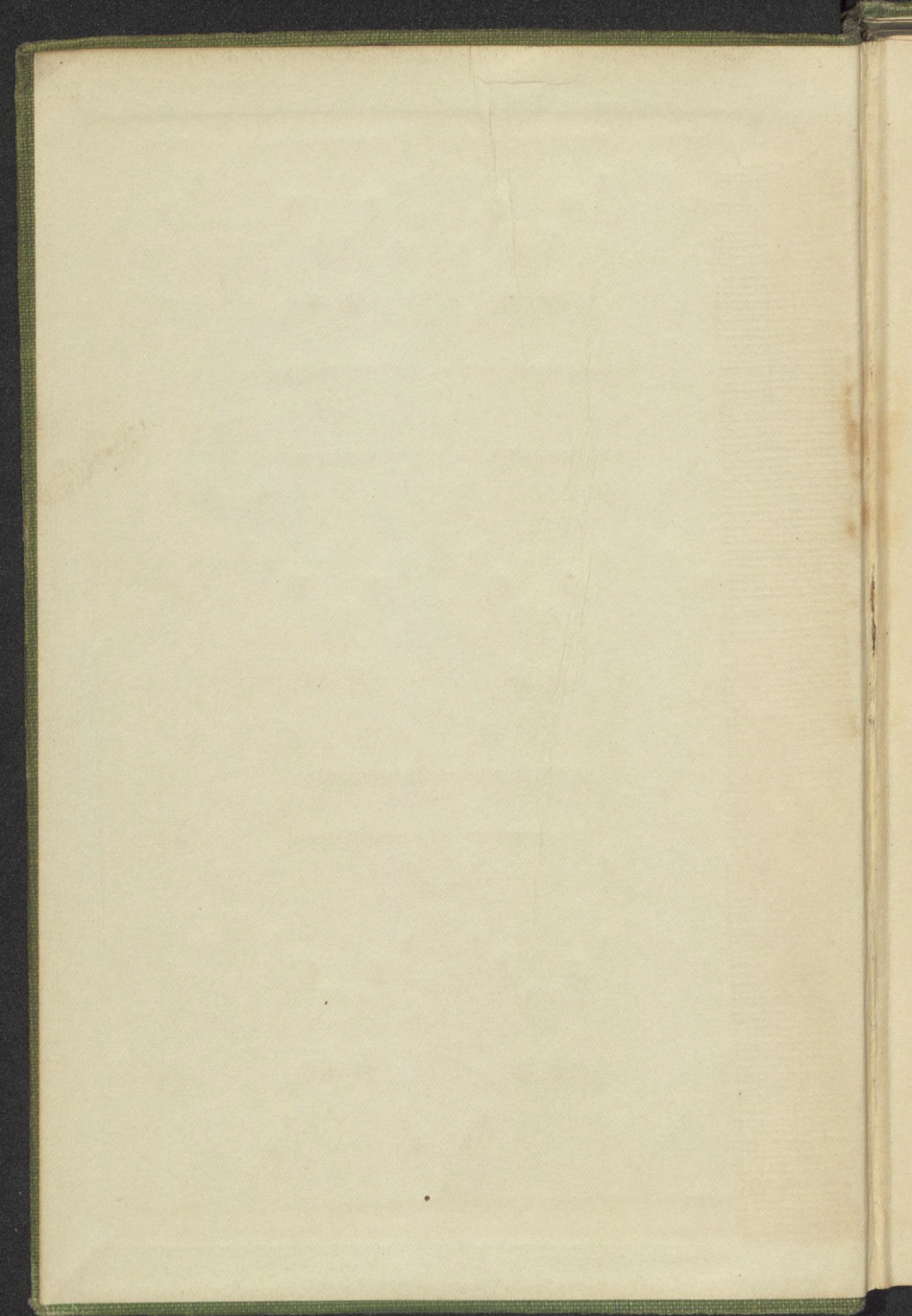
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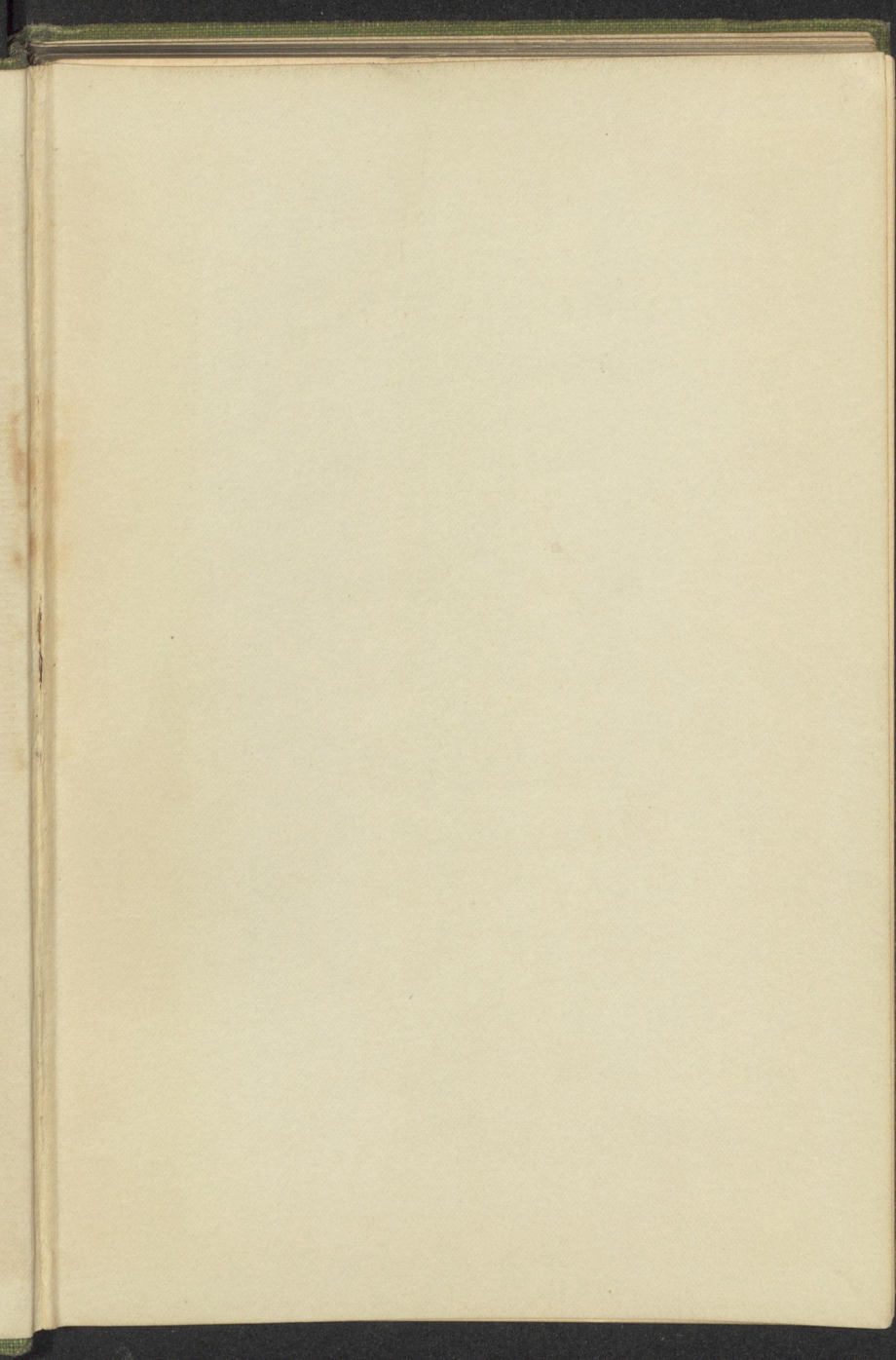


The Young Man Four-Square

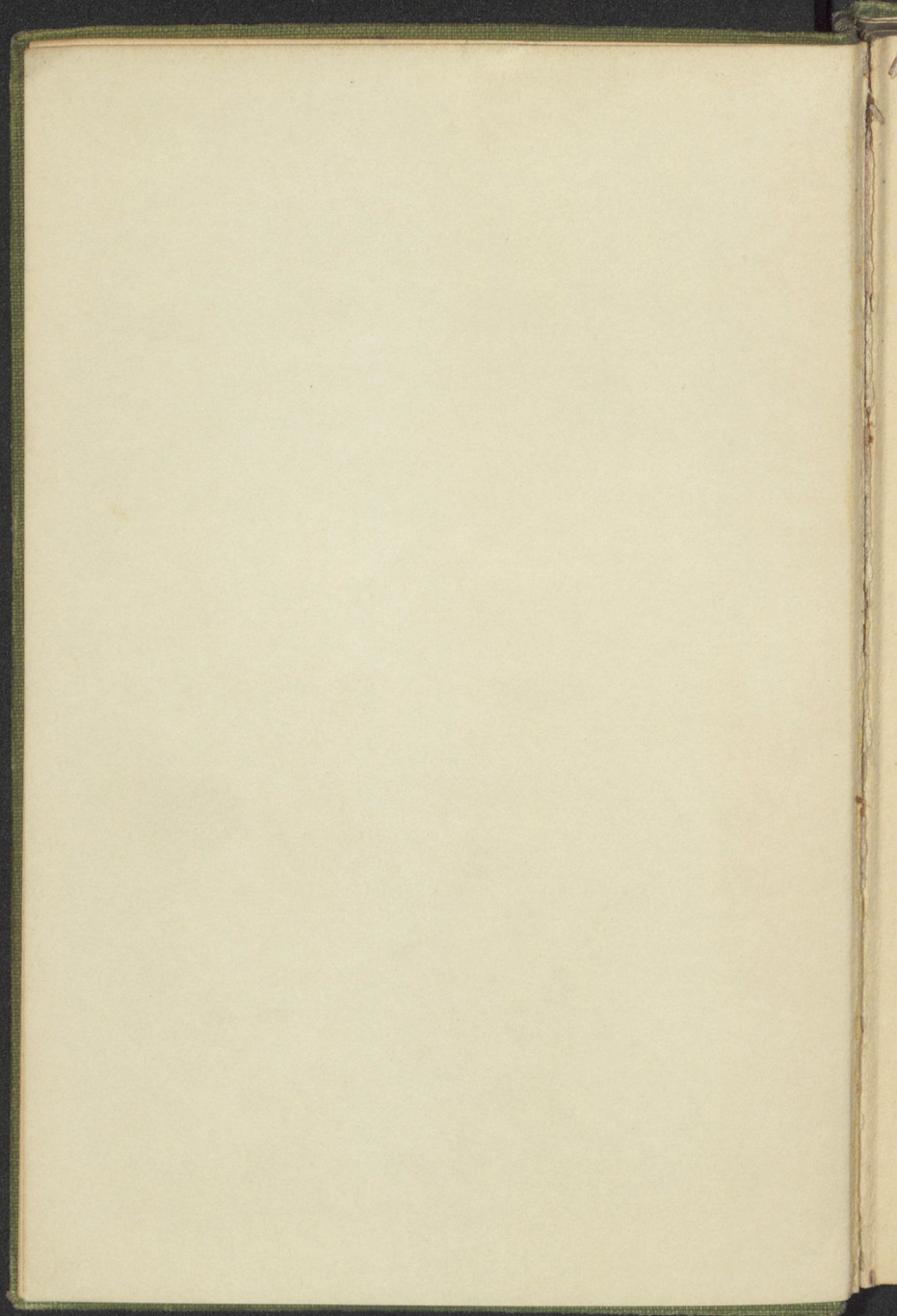
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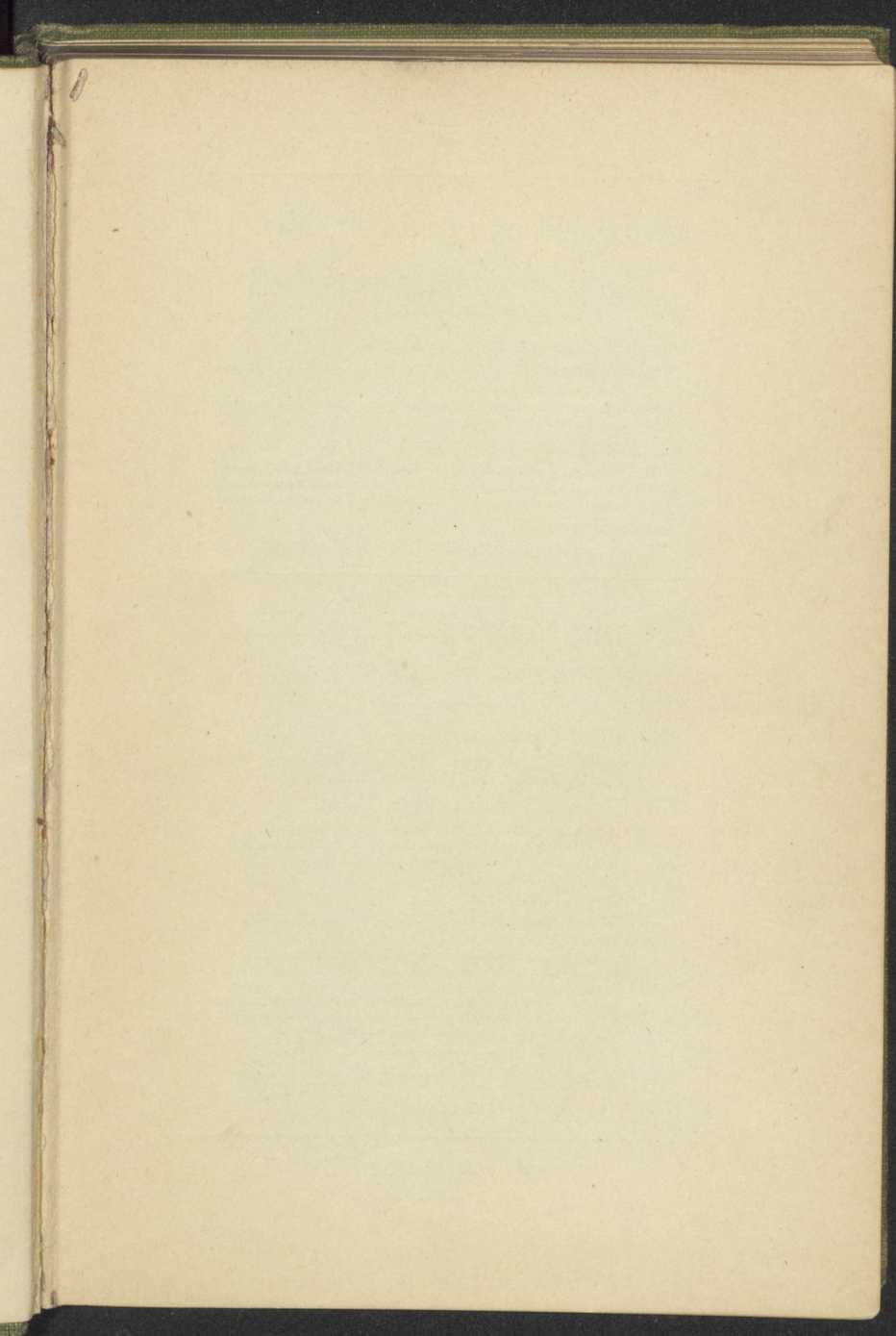












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# THE YOUNG MAN FOURSQUARE

BY

Rev. James I. Vance, D.D.

Author of "The College of Apostles," etc.

Fleming H. Revell Company

New York      Chicago      Toronto

*Publishers of Evangelical Literature*



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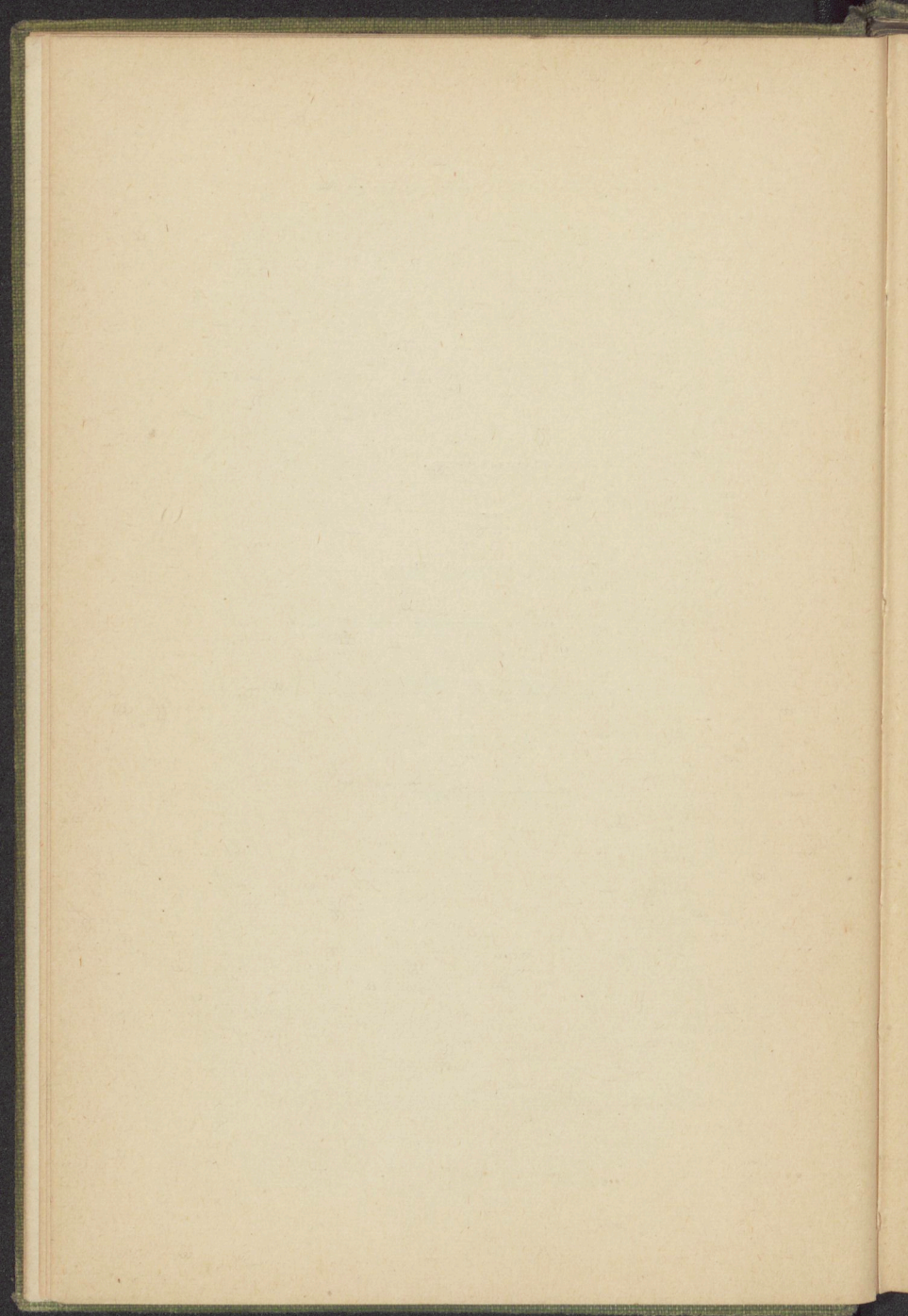
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"The city lieth foursquare." Rev. 21 : 16.

DEDICATED  
TO  
EVERY YOUNG MAN  
WHO HAS AN AMBITION TO MAKE  
THE MOST OF HIMSELF  
AND HIS  
OPPORTUNITIES.

"And stand foursquare to all the winds that blow."



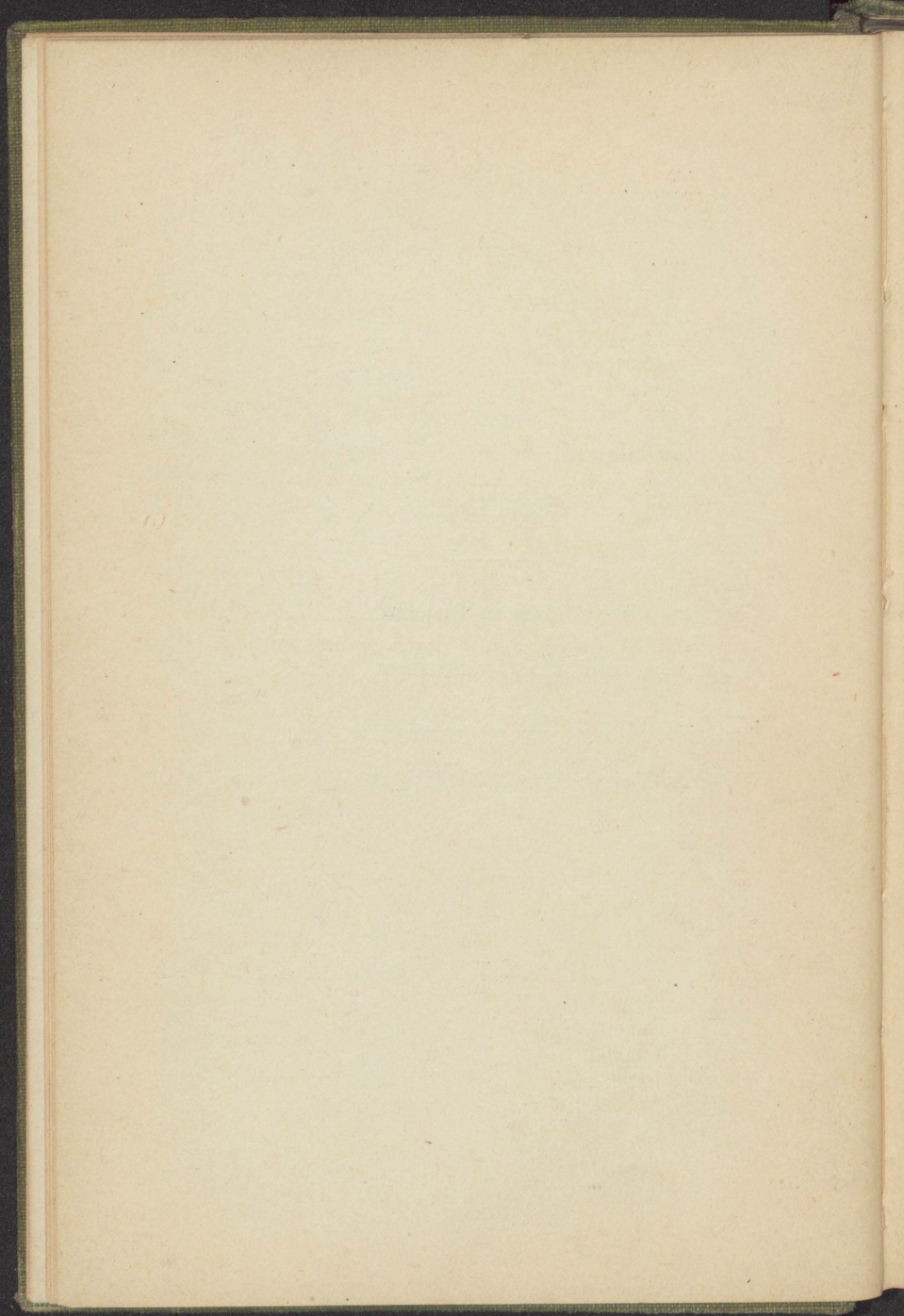




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## CHAPTER I.

### THE YOUNG MAN IN BUSINESS.

*"Seest thou a man diligent in his business ? he shall stand before kings ; he shall not stand before obscure men."* Prov. 22 : 29.

AT ten years of age, Benjamin Franklin was cutting wicks for tallow candles in a Boston chandler's shop. At seventeen, on a Sabbath morning, we find him trudging through the streets of Philadelphia, with all his earthly possessions on his back and in his pockets. The sum total of his assets consisted of some old clothes, a dollar in silver, a shilling in copper coin, and — himself. As he tramped by, a girl who afterward became his wife looked out of the window and laughed at the grotesque figure of young Franklin. But the lad was diligent. He applied himself assiduously. He had a genius for work. His abilities were soon recognized. He rose. By and by, he became the founder of the University of Pennsylvania and of the American Philosophical



Society. And little more than half a century after that Sabbath morning when we saw him walking along the streets of Philadelphia, the butt of a girl's ridicule, we find him standing before the king of France, the accredited ambassador plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

Joseph was diligent in his business, and he passed from the prison cell to the throne of Egypt. Daniel was diligent in business, and he passed from slavery to the premiership of the Babylonian empire. Nehemiah was diligent in business, and he passed from exile and obscurity to the glory of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a restored Jewish throne. God keeps his word. Diligence is crowned.

To the young man who is just on the threshold of his business career, I would commend most emphatically this maxim culled from the book of Proverbs, God's code for business life.

Let us give the word "business" more than its technical meaning in this discussion. Let us make it ampler than barter and sale, than bargain and contract. Let it stand for one's vocation in life, whether that be a trade, or a profession, or a calling; whether one sells goods or teaches school, or plods at manual

toil for a daily wage. Whatever your distinctive life work is, that is your business.

I.

And now my first word to you is that EVERY YOUNG MAN SHOULD BE IN SOME BUSINESS. God has not sent us into the world merely to have a good time. We are here for something more than to ornament society. Living is not playing. God has ordained work. He has set aside six days out of every seven for that purpose, and he is as truly served by filling the six days with earnest, active toil, as he is by sanctifying the one day with rest.

Work is a blessing. It is the antidote for many a sickness. Work! It makes the eye clear and the complexion rosy. It makes the muscles strong, and the brain clean, and sends the blood swirling through artery and vein at a healthy gait. It is nature's panacea for half the ills that afflict the body. There would be less dyspepsia, and consequently less of the religion that makes people miserable, if there were more exercise of the body in the sort of work that God sent Adam to do when he left Paradise.

Work is honorable. Jesus took his place in the ranks of the working classes, and from that



time it has been hard for a young man to get into better company than that of the working-people.

And work is right. Idleness is wrong. Idleness is the suicide of our noblest manhood. "The desire of the slothful killeth him ; for his hands refuse to labor."<sup>1</sup>

If there is one thing more than another that destroys self-respect and forfeits all claim to the respect of one's neighbors, it is for a young man to take advantage of the hard work of his father or grandfather, who may have accumulated a fortune, to keep from working himself. A little girl mentioned to me one day a man's name, the father of one of her little playmates, and I carelessly asked, "What does he do?" "He doesn't do anything," she said. "O ! he is an invalid." And with a look on her childish face that tried to be an apology for what she was convinced could not be quite right, she answered, "No ; his father supports him. His father is rich."

When did money ever become letters-patent to a perpetual baby-hood? No, no ! a fortune can never exempt a man from the obligation to work. No matter how fine a property your ancestors may have left you, young man, go into some business on your

<sup>1</sup> Prov. 21 : 25.

own account. The finest legacy ever handed down from sire to son is not bank account, nor landed property, nor bonds yielding a safe per cent. The very finest legacy, apart from a Christian example, that parents ever transmit to their sons and daughters is a legacy of industrious habits.

Many young men grow up with the notion that the world owes them a living. A fate over which they had no control has brought them here, and now it must take care of them. Some of them have an idea that any community is just a bit more respectable for numbering them among its citizens; and that the old earth thrills through with a throb of deeper pride every time their foot touches *terra firma*. Young men would best climb down from that sort of pedestal as soon as possible. We are making a tremendous mistake in the estimate of our assets. The world does not owe any body a living; but we owe the world the work of a true, honest, industrious life. We must make some returns for the space we occupy on this planet.

Out on the railroad track stands a locomotive. She is a perfect piece of machinery, every bolt and wheel and screw in place, and all working in thorough harmony. She is



beautiful, but the engine was not bought for that. She would not be suffered to stand on the track an hour, unless she could do something. She is a beauty because of her service; and the world is after her service. It is not lineage nor possession nor station, but *service* that crowns us with the royalty of true manhood.

So there comes a day in the life of every young man, made of the right stuff, when he must go out to service. He can tarry under the old home-roof no longer, home-fed and home-cared for. He must begin his life work. It is a moment of supreme meaning. The dormant powers of the man he is to be are waking up now. He has thought much of that busy life that awaits him, and of the great world. He has had his dreams and fancies, his hours of vague ambitions and wonderment; but reality has come now. The castles in the air must come down out of cloud-land and show whether they have form and substance enough to endure.

It is a better day than any that has ever come to the young man before — this day when fact supplants fancy, when visions are to scatter before realities, and doing is to take the place of dreaming.

“ Dreaming is pleasant, I know, my boy ;  
Dreaming is pleasant, I know.  
To dream of that wonderful far-off day  
When you ’ll be a man and have only to say  
To this one and that one, Do that and do this,  
While your wishes fulfillment never shall miss,  
May fill you with pleasure ; but deeper the joy  
Of doing a thing yourself, my boy—  
Of doing a thing yourself.”

And so the young man stands there a moment, his foot on the front door-step, his hand on the door-knob, childhood behind him and manhood before him, and opening wide his eyes, he looks the great, big world straight in the face.

There is one question that must be answered. He has determined to do something. What shall he do? He has determined to go into business. What business? That question demands careful and mature consideration. The young man will receive much advice from his friends and relatives. Circumstances will come up as a factor in settling the problem. But it is too big a matter to be settled by advice and environment. The business which the young man chooses now will have much to do in making his life a success or a failure. He will have to follow this business a long time perhaps. It will grow



terribly monotonous and irksome, if it be not congenial. A blunder here is almost fatal.

What shall be your business in life? That question is worth praying over. It is worth going down on your knees before God, and asking that divine light may shine upon the pathway.

Put your sentiments and pride aside, and let your common sense have full play in deciding this matter. I commend two elements for your consideration.

First, the *openings*. There are some of the professions crammed to overflowing. There are trades where competition is so fierce that mechanics have banded themselves together in "unions" to prevent any, beyond a certain number, learning the trade. It is poor policy for you to throw yourself away by trying to do what is already overdone. Better enter on a work where the opportunities are larger, and success is not reached by climbing over the ruin of competitors. A merchant invests his capital where it will yield the best returns. Why not be as worldly wise in the investment where your life is the capital?

The other consideration has reference to your *special fitness*. What is your talent?

We cannot all do everything ; still God rarely makes a man but can do *something*. What can you do best ? Study your native endowments, your individual bent. Is it literature ? Is it mechanics ? Is it law ? Is it finance ? Don't be so much concerned in getting a business that will make you respectable, as in getting one that you can make respectable. Better thrive at a trade than starve as a poet. Better make a good mason than an indifferent physician.

With sturdy common sense, studying your surroundings and yourself ; and with faith in God, earnestly seeking divine guidance, you will not go far astray in the search for your work in life.

Having found that, do it. Stick to it. Day after day, steadily, with fullness of purpose, and fixity of aim, press toward the mark for the prize of your calling.

## II.

And now with this first question settled, the next matter is your BUSINESS PRINCIPLES. That your life-work go forward steadily and well, it should be ballasted with sound principles.



Turn a locomotive loose in the field, and it will make little headway. It will only go plowing through mud and gravel, through soil and stream to its own destruction. But put it on that gleaming track of shining steel, and away it sweeps out into the darkness, racing with the wind, bearing freight and carrying passengers across the continent. Sound principles are to business life, what the shining track of ballasted steel rails is to the locomotive. They enable it to get up momentum. They guide it to the right destination. Let us throw these principles into the shape of certain maxims. There are some maxims that pass current in a certain type of commercial life, which I would have you reject.

One of these says, "Take every man for a rascal until you find him out better." You will meet with a great many rascals in the course of your business career, but it is wisest not to anticipate them. The disagreeable comes soon enough anyhow. It is better to think the best of our fellow-men. Life is a dreadfully vexatious thing to the man who is convinced that he is surrounded by thieves, liars, and sneaks. Be cautious, of course, but it will be soon enough to take your neighbor for a rascal, when he is proved to be such.

Another maxim to reject is, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." You can reach a certain kind of success in this way, to be sure, but such success is purchased at too great a price. It is such a pity to be an animal when one might be a man. Instead of grabbing and grasping, with sordid greed, all that is within our reach, it is sweeter and diviner to suffuse our very bargains with thoughtfulness for others.

Then don't determine to "make money at all hazards." It is well enough to make money, and I hope you will make a great deal of it, but don't let money-making be the chief end of your life. Do n't let your soul dwindle down to the dimensions of a dollar. Run a heavy mark through all such maxims as these and cancel them forever from your business life. In their stead will you let me suggest the following :—

1. *Be master of your business.* Do n't let your business master you. In the busy rush and sharp competition of secular activity, it will sometimes be hard for you to keep this. Many a man, as he goes down to business in the morning, needs to offer some such prayer as that which Lord Ashley made on the brink of the battle of Edgehill: "O Lord, thou



knowest that I must be very busy to-day. If I forget thee, do not thou, O Lord, forget me."

There are men in some of our offices and counting-rooms that are as veritably slaves as any that ever picked cotton on a Southern plantation. They are under the whip of a master. Their business has mastered them, and their lives are getting narrower, darker, harder day by day, under the galling yoke of this bondage. However much he may have accumulated, it may be gravely questioned whether such a man has not failed after all. There are duties to home, to society, to church, to wife and children, to God; and business cares have enslaved us, when they prevent the discharge of duties like these.

2. *Be proud of your business.* Whatever it may be, do n't blush when you have to tell men how you make your living. Somebody has said that the man who is above his business, will soon find his business above him.

3. *Refuse from the beginning to go security.* This will be a maxim hard to keep. As secular life is now organized, it seems almost essential that we have suretyships. There will be a day when some friend will come to you and ask you to put your name on his paper, and it will

be very hard to refuse. Perhaps there will come another day when you will have to go to your friend and ask him to put his name on your paper. And yet there is very good authority for putting an article against going security into your business code, and making that article as unchangeable as the law of the Medes and Persians.

In Prov. 11 : 15 there is a sentence worth framing and hanging on the wall of every counting-room in the land. It runs like this :  
“He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it ; and he that hateth suretyship is sure.”  
And in Prov. 22 : 26, we read : “Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.”

And yet if there were not this sound advice from the wisest book men have, experience would be enough to teach it. There are too many mournful instances of those who have worked hard and accumulated a competency, and then, in an evil hour having affixed their signature to some friend's obligation, they have lived to see their entire property swept away, and themselves reduced to the hardships of a penniless old age.

4. *Honor God in your business.* This is the crowning maxim for the finest business



success. Refuse to enter upon any business which dishonors God or hurts humanity. Let the profits be ever so large, it were far better to fail of a fortune than to lose your God. Prof. Finney tells of a man who came to him during a meeting at Edinburg, and said that he had accepted Christ as his Saviour and was ready to make a full consecration to God. "Suppose we go down on our knees and tell God that," said the evangelist. And so Finney prayed: "O Lord, this man declares that he is prepared to take thee as his God, and to cast himself upon thy care now and forever." The man responded with a hearty "Amen!" "O Lord, this man vows that he is ready to give his wife, family, and all their interests up to thee." Another hearty "Amen!" "O Lord, he says that he is willing to give thee his business, whatever it may be, and conduct it for thy glory." A profound silence followed this petition, and Mr. Finney, surprised, asked, "Why do you not say 'Amen' now?" The man answered, "Because the Lord will not take my business. I am in the liquor trade."

There are some kinds of business that are God-dishonoring. They cannot be consecrated to God. They would best be aban-

doned. Undoubtedly faith, strong faith, is required to take such a step as this, and yet God is pledged to care for those who trust him. He may try them, but he will not let them perish; and even the trial of faith will be found at last to have been "precious."

It is said that when Nicholas Biddle was president of the bank of the United States, he wished a clerk in his employ to do some writing on the Sabbath. The young man refused and was dismissed. For what might be termed an "over-nice scruple of conscience," this young man, with a mother dependent upon him, was thrown out of work. A few days later, Mr. Biddle was asked to nominate a cashier for another bank, and he named this young man; and as a proof of his trustworthiness, said, "You can trust him, for he would not work for me on Sunday." "Them that honor me, I will honor,"<sup>1</sup> It is the word of God, and as surely as God lives and reigns, that word will be kept.

It would also be well to let God have some share in the profits of your business. It is a good thing to have as partner one who never fails; and God never fails. Set aside some part of your income, a tenth, or whatever amount you may decide upon, and let that



be God's portion, to be used for the honor of his cause.

### III

And now having chosen his vocation in life, and determined the principles upon which it is to be followed, success depends largely on the young man himself. There are certain QUALIFICATIONS, OR TRAITS, which the young man in business should possess. Possessing these, the apprentice becomes foreman, and the foreman proprietor; the clerk rises to a place in the firm, and the office boy comes to have an office of his own.

1. *Self-reliance.* Do n't depend too much on your relatives. Do n't trust too much to good luck. Most depends on you, the man behind your business. It was John Fradley whose unvarying motto was, "Self-dependence and self-reliance." He said, "My observations through life satisfy me that at least nine tenths of those most successful in business, start in life without any reliance except upon their own heads and hands — hoe their own row from the jump."

2. *Honesty.* It is better to be honest than rich. The men who give society and commerce its stability are not the charlatans and pettifoggers and quacks and counterfeiterers.

They are honest men. In writing to some young men, Charles Kingsley said : —

“My dear boys, the human race may for all practical purposes, be divided into three parts : —

1. Honest men, who intend to do right, and do it.
2. Knaves, who mean to do wrong, and do it.
3. Fools, who aim to do whichever is the pleasanter. This latter class may be subdivided thus : Black fools, who would rather do wrong, but dare not unless with the crowd ; white fools who would rather do right, but lack courage unless it is the fashion.”

Now, men who make history are not the knaves ; they are not the fools ; they are the honest men. All others are but flotsam and jetsam on the tides of time.

If a young man wants to leave any worthy mark on his day and generation, he would best determine at the outset that he will live honestly, come what will.

There will come a great many temptations to break over a resolve like this. There will be times when the lure of big profits at the expense of principle will be almost irresistible. You will say : “I can quiet my conscience a little to-day. Other men would do it. Why should I be over-scrupulous ? Besides, this will never be discovered.” He who listens to such a voice is loosing from his moorings, and will go drifting, he knows not where.



If we will look at the matter from none other than the sordid, material standpoint, we would best be honest. Honesty pays in the long run. Out of ages of experience the proverb has come that "honesty is the best policy."

3. *Reliability.* Many a young man starts out well; and friends are glad to lend a helping hand, and they bring the youth their patronage and custom, for no other reason than to encourage him in his first venture. But he grows careless. He neglects business for pleasure. He allows a ball or an excursion to consume hours that should have been given to business. Directly he finds his customers slipping away. They have found their young friend unreliable, and however much they might like to do so, they simply cannot afford to help him. Reliability is a capital in itself. Keep your engagements. Be punctual. Be diligent.

If the young man is to be reliable, he must not be dissipated. He must not keep late hours. It is all very fine to "run with the boys," and have a "lark;" but life's work is worth more than such rush-lights.

The statement has been made repeatedly in public print that some of the government's

clerks at Washington, are required, on appointment, to pledge themselves to the following : —

1. That you will be a total abstinence man, never tasting of any ardent spirits, wine, or other intoxicating drinks.

2. That you will never gamble, or play at chance games.

3. That you will keep none but steady and respectable society.

4. That you will always keep the Sabbath strictly, and attend public worship. And that you will be steady, industrious, persevering, and faithful to your business.

It matters not for the point in hand, whether government clerks subscribe to such a pledge or not ; it goes without the saying that it is on such habits as these that reliability in business life depends.

4. *Energy.* The young man in business must be energetic. It is a fast age. It has created and destroyed the marvels of the "White City." It is the age in which electricity is fast superceding steam. Everything is a drive, a rush, and the competitions are endless and ceaseless. The day has gone by for the business man to rest on his oars. He will be passed if he does. It takes a mount-



ain a long time to move. It were better for you to go to the mountain than wait for the mountain to come to you. If business does not come, hunt it, find it, have it. Be energetic. There are two classes of people that never amount to anything. One is composed of those who are always waiting for something to turn up—the Micawbers. The others are those who are continually concocting some bewildering scheme with millions in it, by which they hope to make a fortune with the stroke of a pen or the wave of a hand. These are the Col. Sellerses. Both the Micawbers and the Col. Sellerses are idlers. They fritter time away. Their hands refuse to labor. They are foredoomed to failure. Work is the divine key to greatness. Genius is only the unlimited capacity for work. The world's great men have all been great toilers. Franklin, Spurgeon, Gladstone,—we stand amazed at the stupendous amount of work they performed. The world's men of genius have usually been those who “longed for a thing so strongly that for the sake of its attainment they conquered obstacles, lived down opposition, ignored discouragement, and through years of trial and obscurity moved

steadily and energetically toward the fulfillment of a hope."

5. *Thoroughness.* It is better to do one thing well than many indifferently. Concentrate your powers on your work. Concentrate your work that your powers may grasp it. No man can handle a pound of water in vapor, but condense it into liquid and the task is easy. As civilization advances, we are applying more and more the law of division of labor. One man gives his life to the diseases of the ear; another to those of the eye. One mechanic touches one part of a bolt, one artisan spends his life on the part of a gold pen but little larger than a pin's point. When the field of human energy is so narrowed, expertness is developed. Workmen become more thorough, and the product that satisfied the world a generation ago is now regarded as crude and unfinished. Hence, the very conditions of life make thoroughness essential to success.

6. *Courage.* You must keep a stout heart, young man. You will have discouragements many and mighty. You will have "black Fridays." There will be times when the skies above you will be dense with cloud, and you can see nothing but foreclosure and ruin.



Whether there be any financial panic in the big world outside or not, there will come days when it will be the worst sort of panic in your little corner. Then you need to hold up your head, and set your jaw like a vise, and go on. Be courageous and persevere. The tide is sure to turn if you can only hold out long enough. On a winter's morning, when eighteen inches of snow lay on the ground, a gentleman found a five-year old boy with a toy-shovel, at work in the snow. "What are you doing my little man?" he asked. "Cleaning off the pavement." "But how in the world do you expect to get all this snow away?" "By keeping at it, sir," chirped the lad.

Ah, that's the ring of the right coin. "Keeping at it," will conquer nine tenths of our difficulties.

"For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the elements rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace, then a joy,  
Then a light."<sup>1</sup>

7. *Trustfulness.* Finally, be trustful; not trusting, but trustful. Trusting is your life turned toward man. Trustful is your life

<sup>1</sup> Robert Browning.

turned toward God. It were better not to do too much trusting. The credit business is a bad business. Pay as you go, is the safest rule for all classes.

But you cannot be too trustful. Have faith in God for all the work of the six days, as well as for the grateful rest of the one day. Do a credit business with God, without limit.

On the coat of arms of the Prince of Wales, there is a famous inscription, borrowed from a saintly and heroic life. After acknowledging that he holds his title by the grace of God, there follows this line, "Whose I am, and whom I serve." That is a splendid motto for the young man in business,—“Whose I am.” I belong to God in my business life. “Whom I serve,”—I must serve God in my business life.

Self-reliant, honest, reliable, energetic, thorough, courageous, trustful,—these qualifications make a peerless business man.

I began with self-reliance, dependence on self, and I close with trustfulness, dependence on God. They seem to contradict, but like the lines on the old Corinthian columns, if carried high enough, they will meet somewhere above. Work as if everything depended on yourself and trust as if everything depended on **your**



God, and some day it will appear that your work and your trust were both parts of the same great life-throb.

When Jesus was upon the earth, he said, "I must be about my Father's business." And there is a sense in which you and I may reverently make those words our own. As we plan and toil and invest and expend and accumulate in our secular activity, all should be sanctified and suffused with the thought that we are about our heavenly Father's business. The spiritual and the secular should never be so divorced that God absorbs one and is excluded from the other.

It was a beautiful custom which our ancestors followed of raising a cross in the midst of the market-place, as if they would say that in all their dealings with one another, men should be controlled by the teachings and example of the life that was given on the cross for the redemption of the world.

Young men, it is as we live thus that we not only accumulate a property on earth, but likewise lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves break not through nor steal.

And when at last there is no more the rush of trade and the bustle of toil, when shop and office and stock exchange are all behind us, and the last great note is falling due, we shall not be confounded ; for we shall have the wherewithal to meet its obligations.

“Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings ; he shall not stand before obscure men.”

Seest thou a man diligent in his business — diligent with an activity inspired of heaven and resourceful as faith,— he shall stand before the KING OF KINGS.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE YOUNG MAN IN SOCIETY.

*“There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, . . . and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. John 2 : 1, 2.*

The young man in society,—that means the young man off duty and on pleasure bent, the young man on dress parade. Man is a gregarious animal. He goes in nations and tribes and kindreds and families and sets and clubs and cliques and fraternities and colonies and associations and guilds and leagues and parties.

The gregarious instinct asserts itself among the fishes of the sea, and we have shoals. The gregarious instinct asserts itself among the insects of the air, and we have swarms. The gregarious instinct asserts itself among the cattle in the fields and the sheep on the hillsides, and we have droves and herds and flocks. The gregarious instinct asserts itself in humanity, and we have SOCIETY.

In its broadest meaning, society is the union of human beings around some general interest ; and so we may have a society that is literary or political or musical or ecclesiastical. But there is a narrower and more technical meaning to the word, when we use it to denote the intermingling of human beings in domestic life for purposes of recreation and hospitality. It is in this narrower sense that the word is used in this chapter.

In this sense society is easy enough to define, but rather difficult to determine. It is so diverse. It is a conglomerate of the most heterogeneous elements. Society is split into innumerable sets and cliques, each claiming to be the most select, and each arrogating to itself the name "Society." Society does a great many foolish things. It is envious and jealous and proud, and often mean. It worships a great many false gods. One little set falls down before the false god of wealth, and with them society depends on rich entertainments and the lavish expenditure of money. Another little set bows down before the false god of lineage and birth, and with them society is restricted to the first families. Still another little set falls on its face before the false god of learning, and with them society



consists of the *litterati*. And so the divisions are endless and the standards petty. After all, it is the point of view that creates much of this. Nearly everything is relative in society. One never falls so low in the social scale, but there is somebody below him, or at any rate, somebody whom he thinks below him, and that amounts to pretty much the same thing. Man never rises so high in the social scale, but he finds somebody beyond him, or at any rate somebody who thinks himself beyond him.

Many of these social distinctions are foolish, some are shameful, some are sinful; but as long as people have the right to choose their associates, these distinctions will exist. So long as there are differences of culture and breeding, and so long as human beings cluster about that which is mutually congenial, so long will society have its "sets." Besides it may be gravely questioned whether social anarchy or communism is desirable, even if it were possible.

Society is the *intermingling of people*, and that is its crown. We leave our trade, our bills of lading, our briefs and prescription tablets, our tools and work-baskets—our *things* behind us, and for a little while we

are concerned with people. That cannot but be beneficial. We grasp each other by the hand and exchange the salutations of friendship. We look into each other's faces, and chat about a dozen trivial insignificances. But we are studying humanity. Our hands are free for awhile, from sordid and material things, and while society may not always be a little paradise, it has joys and blessings which we cannot surrender.

### I.

Therefore THE YOUNG MAN SHOULD GO INTO SOCIETY. He needs all that it can give him. He needs the relaxation and recuperation which he will find there. He needs now and then to get away from the grind and dull care of work, and throw off his burdens amid the genial delights and merriment of social life. You do not keep your violin or guitar tightly strung all the time. When they have done their service, you loosen the chords. Lute strings are all the sweeter for being now and then unstrung; and the lute strings of a human life are all the sweeter for being occasionally relaxed. Life regains its elasticity and the heart strings, a sweeter song of delight.



The young man needs to go into society because of its refining influences. If he shuts himself up in solitude, and leads a life apart from his fellows, he will almost inevitably grow awkward, rude, and bearish. There is a refinement of feeling, a polish of manner, a delicacy and ease which men never acquire save in the society of ladies. Yea, there is a purity of heart, a lofty ideal of virtue thus inspired which will be worth not a little to a young man in the hour of temptation.

Some one has said that women are the poetry of life, just as the stars are the poetry of the heavens. "Clear, light-giving, harmonious,—they are the terrestrial planets that rule the destinies of mankind."<sup>1</sup>

It is a hundred times better to be in some home, in the society of pure-minded girlhood, than to imitate many of the young men in our cities who spend their evenings at the club or on the street corners, or around the pool-table.

Society is a prevention. It is a grateful recreation. Let the young man go into society. In this opinion, we have the endorsement of Jesus Christ. Let us glance for a moment at one of the bright scenes in his gracious ministry. There was to be a mar-

<sup>1</sup> Hargrave.

riage at Cana of Galilee. Up there among the hills somebody's troth was to be plighted. A Galilean youth had wooed and won a Jewish maiden's heart, and the drama of love, as old as Eden, and as fresh and fascinating to-day as ever, was to be played again up there in that quiet village of the hills. The invitations to the marriage had been sent out, and they had gone so far as Nazareth, and Jesus and his disciples were among the invited guests.

The blessed Lord was gracious enough to accept that invitation. It was his first public appearance after his baptism. He mingled in the festivities of that social event, and I do not think that his presence was a cloud at the feast. I do not think the merriment was checked, nor the laughter less glad, nor the light in the eye less bright, nor the color in the cheek less glowing, because Jesus was there. I am inclined to think that guest made the joy and gladness at Cana all the more intense for his presence.

While the feast was at its height, the wine ran low, and Mary, who was probably a relative of either the bride or the bridegroom, in her perplexity came to Jesus and told him the dilemma. Then Jesus turned the water into



wine, and the feast went on. It was our Lord's first miracle. There are those who are perplexed by this, and some who find here a defense of wine-drinking and an excuse for dissipation. If Jesus made wine at Cana for the revellers at a Jewish wedding, then surely wine-drinking cannot be wrong to-day. Such is the argument. It is not my purpose to discuss this matter here. It is enough to say that the conditions surrounding the use of alcoholic drinks then were totally different from what they are now. There was not a saloon on every street corner in Cana of Galilee. The liquid damnation that is dealt out in grog-shops now, was not an article of commerce then. Wines were pure. Liquors were few. The conditions have completely changed. But why argue the matter? Jesus turned the water into wine. Can't we trust him?

But this is only a digression. The incident is cited to show Christ's approval of social recreations. The first public appearance of Jesus, after he had entered upon his ministry for the world's redemption, was at a social gathering. The first miracle he ever performed was worked that the festivities of that social gathering might continue. And the

book that records the incident is the most profoundly spiritual of the four Gospels. It is in John's Gospel that we find the interview with Nicodemus, where Christ states the mystery of the new birth. It is in the same book that we have our Lord's intercessory prayer. It is this book which opens with those words the full meaning of which we have never yet fathomed: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John reaches the topmost altitudes of religious experience, and drops a plummet into its profoundest depths. He is almost a mystic. And yet it is by this evangelist, and by him only, that the miracle at Cana is recorded. What does that mean? It is John's way of telling us that there can be no contradiction between the joys and merry glad-heartedness of social life and the profoundest spirituality and most devout piety. Cana was not out of harmony with Calvary.

No, no! there is nothing in the religion of Christ to drive away the sunshine from human life. It is a religion of joy and smiles. It is no evidence of piety to wear a long face and talk in funeral tones, and consign all of the innocent recreations of life to the world, the flesh, and the devil. The religion that sends



men out of the world into monasteries and celibacy is not the religion Christ brought into the world. The piety that sends women into the solitude of nunneries and convents lacks utterly the endorsement of heaven. Christ's prayer was not that his people might be taken out of the world, but that they might be kept from the evil that is in the world. And that this social proclivity of human nature might be satisfied with the best food, Christ organized his church in the world. Perhaps if the church were truer to her social mission, less stiff and less frosted over with a false dignity, more genial, more aglow with brotherly kindness, there would be fewer secret orders and outside fraternities, through which men, hungry for comradeship, are reaching for the satisfying of the social instinct.

## II.

However, young gentlemen, the question before us is not speculative but practical. Theoretically society will help you; but we face a condition and not a theory. Society is organized. It is an institution in human life to-day. It has its laws and customs and practices. Will it help you to go into this "society"? Can you participate therein and

maintain your integrity? Is a young man a better man for being a "society man," as we understand that phrase now? — Yes, and no. Society as conducted at present has some advantages and not a few drawbacks. Let us note some of its products, and let us be fair and dispassionate. It is so easy when one begins to discuss the sins of society to rant, and say sharp, cutting things, merely for the sake of being witty. Nevertheless, "by their fruit ye shall know them." Here are some of the unfortunate products of society life.

1. A young man who has reached old age before he reaches his majority. He is the *blasé young man*. He knows everything, and is superior thereto. He has tried and tasted all the world can offer, and turned wearily away. He talks with a mushy articulation and criticises everything. He is utterly lacking in enthusiasm and life. He enjoys absolutely nothing, and punctuates his idiotic remarks with yawns. He never laughs heartily. It would be ill-bred to do so. He is never demonstrative: he might burst a blood vessel, or crease his coat. There is very little of the man about this *blasé* youth, this patriarch of eighteen summers. He is lifeless and insipid. He has melted down into a



polyp, a boneless, flabby mollusk. He could be lost out of the world and never missed. He is not very common, but he is too common. What made him? Who is responsible for his creation? The home did not produce him. The state did not produce him. The church did not produce him. He is the offspring of an emasculated society.

2. *The dishonest young man.* It requires a certain amount of money to go into modern society. There must be a decent wardrobe, and then there are tickets to the ball, to the theater, carriage hire, presents, excursions, and a score of other things that are a constant drain upon the purse. Few young men receive large salaries, and if they are to keep up appearances in society, they will often find the month's wages gone before the month is well begun. What is the result? The young man must borrow. Nowhere is pride so injurious as here. Nowhere is humiliation so galling. So the young man borrows from his friends, and when this resource is gone, what shall he do? Pride has the whip. The demands of society are remorseless. He borrows from his employer on the sly. A day comes when he can no longer return what he has borrowed. He is a thief! His honor

is gone. You say he ought to have been braver, he ought to have resisted temptation. Yes; but it is too late now, and his character is branded with a mark which like Cain's can never be washed out.

3. *The dissipated young man.* How could it be otherwise, so long as wine is "the proper thing" at fashionable social entertainments, and the punch bowl crowns the festal board? Not all the drunkards are made by the saloon. There are multitudes of young men who never would have learned to drink, had it been necessary for them to learn at the groggery. But society makes wine-drinking decent. It glosses the vice with respectability. And wine-drinking youths make whisky-drinking men. Wine-drinking is not a temperance measure. That fallacy has long since been exploded; and many a young man has learned to his sorrow that the wine which made the ball so merry and his wit so glib, had hell in its dregs.

4. In addition to these products, modern society is justly chargeable with diminishing reverence for the marriage relation. Flirtation is one of the fine arts of society life. Engagements that ought to be almost as sacred as the marriage vow are lightly made



and as lightly broken. Many an unfortunate marriage had only social expediency for its inspiration. Divorces are alarmingly frequent. Of course, society is not to blame for all of them; but it is patent that there would be fewer cases in the divorce courts, if men and women would learn that for a happy marriage there must be compatibility of temperament, mutual respect, and congeniality, yea, something of that attachment between husband and wife, which our heavenly Father had in mind when he said: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."<sup>1</sup>

Enough has been said to show that our social life is not all that should be desired. I might mention its formality, its hypocrisy, its false standards, its mad jealousy to out-shine a rival, its suspicions, its extravagance, its wastefulness; but this is enough. I have shown when its evil effects becloud the young man's horizon; and enough has been said to show that the young man would best first sit down and count the cost.

Can you afford to go into society? Will your income stand the strain? Will impending humiliation and a false pride tempt you

<sup>1</sup>Gen. 2 : 24.

to be dishonest? Can you afford it from a *business standpoint*? You are just starting out upon your business career. Success demands closeness of application. It requires diligence. Will the dissipation incident to social recreations absorb time and energies that your business should have? If so, you would best let society languish and attend to business.

Can you afford it *morally*? Can you be a Christian and indulge in all of the excesses and frivolities of society? If not, which will you give up, your soul or society? As a matter of fact, there are young men who are saying, "We will have a good time. We will dance and drink and be merry. Religion is prosy. We will attend to it later on." They remind me of an old inebriate who suffered from inflamed eyes, and who went to his physician and asked to be cured. After an examination, the physician said: "My friend, you will have to give up drink, or give up your eyes." He reflected a moment, and replied, "Then farewell, eyes."

There are young men who know that the issue is plainly drawn between the salvation of their souls and the excesses and dissipations of a debauched society, and they are



deliberately saying that their souls may go. What a bargain! You are as foolish as Esau who sold his birthright for a beggarly mess of pottage.

### III.

If society, as at present constituted, is not what we wish and need, what shall we do? Throw it overboard? That would be impracticable and impossible, even if it were desirable. Young people, especially, must have some sort of amusement. If innocent and helpful amusements are not furnished, hurtful ones will be found. It is a grave dilemma which confronts many a young man of high ideals. He knows if he refuses to participate in certain social recreations, he will suffer social ostracism. He is averse to that, and probably just as averse to countenancing and endorsing what his conscience condemns.

Is there any way out of this dilemma? Well, society needs to be saved. It has two grave defects. It needs *more brains*, and *more heart*. I would not be misunderstood. I do not say that the individuals who make up society are lacking in either of these respects, for they are not. Some of the cleverest and kindest people in the world are what are called "society people." And society can be

kind after a fashion. It will pay ten dollars for tickets to a charity ball, and dance until three o'clock in the morning, and have a glorious time for the relief of some hospital or orphan asylum.

When I affirm that society needs more brains and more heart, I am not speaking of individuals but of the institution, and that this is not a false charge will appear from a little reflection.

1. Society needs more *brains*. What are its chief amusements?—Dancing and card-playing. Suppose some lady were to determine to give an evening party, and were to announce to her friends that there would be no wine, many would look at her with mild amazement. Suppose, in addition, she were to announce that there would be neither progressive euchre nor whist; they would think she was losing her mind. And suppose that, in addition to this, she were to declare that there would be no dancing, they would hold up their hands in horror, and pronounce the whole affair foredoomed to utter failure. No wine! no whist! no dancing! Why how on earth are people to amuse themselves?

Understand I am not arguing the moral phase of the amusements under consideration.



That is another question, and one on which good people hold diverse views. But I do contend that immortal beings, created in God's image, and endowed with thought, are capable of higher things when they come together for social fellowship ; and society will never be what is needed, so long as it rests on so frivolous a foundation.

2. Society needs more *heart*. It needs more consideration for others. It needs more humanity. The question which is oftenest asked is not whether a thing is right, nor whether it is kind, nor whether it is generous, but, Is it good form ? The more exclusive it is, the more genteel it thinks itself to be. Its greatest ambition is not to encourage and help, but to dazzle and overwhelm. It glories in making an "impression." It squanders large sums of money in giving lavish entertainments that minister to false pride and selfish vanity ; and it casts its mites and farthings to the poor. O there must be something wrong with that society which beats its dress-maker down to starvation wages, and spends an amount equal to her earnings for a whole, long year, on the flowers for a single evening's pleasure.

Society needs more heart. It needs to have more of the spirit of that little girl, whom Dr. Guthrie met one morning in the Highlands. She was carrying in her arms a little boy almost as large as herself, and in his kindliness of heart, the good doctor said : "Let me help you, my lass. The load is too heavy for your little arms." "O no," she answered with a smile, "he's my brother, sir." She thought that it was impossible for a brother to be a burden. When we feel toward each other like that, society will not be so heartless. When we would rather share each other's burdens, than compete with each other's extravagances, society will be better.

I speak for a society of more heart and more brain, where we shall think more of the graces of the soul than of the body ; where we shall judge a man by what he is rather than by what he has acquired ; where we shall think more of people and less of mere things.

And this chapter will have answered its purpose if it leads some of the young men who read it, to make a manly contribution to the society in which they move, by attempting to realize these high ideals in themselves.



## IV.

That you may, and that you may get the good out of society and avoid the bad, will you let me make the following suggestions for your personal conduct : —

1. Remember that *society is recreation*. It is not business. Whoever follows it for a business will come to grief. He is reducing himself to a cipher. One of the most disgusting spectacles is that of a young man who “cuts a swell,” and “poses as a star in the social world,” but can do nothing more. He is not a man. He is only a monkey ; and the woman who marries him will have to support him. Do n't be everlastingly asking to be amused. That is the sign of a baby mind, and you ought not to tarry in your babyhood forever. After all, life is earnest. We all must have playtime come 'round now and then, but we must not turn life into playtime. “Life is real, life is earnest,” and only those who so regard it, make life a great success.

2. Remember that in society *you are influencing others and being influenced yourself*. It will be hard, at times, to face ridicule, and have the courage of your convictions. But the crowd follows, at last, the man who does

this. Let no influence from your life lead a friend astray.

Pick your associates. They will influence you. It is an old proverb, "Tell me your company, and I'll tell you yourself." "Who runs with wolves will learn to howl." Without having any silly pride, without thinking yourself better than others, be select. "Evil communications corrupt good manners."<sup>1</sup>

3. *Have a lofty ideal of what makes a gentleman, and endeavor under all circumstances to realize that ideal.* Bear in mind that no amount of polish and external grace can atone for a mean spirit within. What is a gentleman?—He is vastly more than a creature arrayed in a full-dress suit and broad expanse of spotless shirt front, curving constantly a supple spinal column, and with a tongue glib enough to rattle off a string of impoverished common-places. The true spirit of a gentleman is that of kind and thoughtful consideration for others. Without this you can never have a gentleman. With it you have a gentleman, whether or not he possess the graces of the drawing room, and be an adept in all of the details of polite etiquette.

There is an old story told of General Lee. He was once on his way to Richmond, and was

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 15:33.



seated in the extreme end of a railroad coach, every seat of which was occupied. At one of the stations, an aged woman of humble appearance entered the car, carrying a large basket on her arm. She walked down the entire length of the aisle, and not a man offered her a seat. When she was opposite the place where General Lee was sitting, he promptly arose and said, "Madam, take this seat." Instantly a score of men were on their feet, and a chorus of voices said, "General, have my seat." The hero of the Confederacy replied, "No, gentlemen. If there was no seat for this old lady, there can be none for me." It was not long before the car was almost empty. It was too warm to be comfortable. General Lee sounded the keynote of a true gentleman. It is unselfishness. It is consideration for others.

The correspondents of the *New York Sun* once attempted to give a definition to the word "gentleman," and some of these were so good as to be worthy of preservation : —

"A gentleman is a knight whose armor is honesty, and sword courtesy."

"A gentleman is a man who has pride without vanity, courage without bravado, and who is innately considerate of the feelings of others."

"A gentleman is fearful of a wrong, zealous of a right, true to himself, chivalrous to women, respectful to men, preserving always a quiet, manly bearing, all the time unostentatiously."

"A gentleman is one who would rather suffer himself than inflict suffering upon others, even upon dumb animals; who loves his country and his fellow-men; who is courtly toward women, modest in suggesting his own rights to others; who minds his own business, and thinks no evil of any living thing."

Perhaps we can find no better definition than the word itself. A gentleman is a gentle, manly man. Let the young man in society always be a gentle, manly man.

Be gentle. Some one has said that gentleness is love in society. "It is love holding intercourse with those around it. It is that cordiality of aspect and that soul of speech, which assures us that kind and earnest hearts may still be met with here below. It is that quiet influence, which, like the scented flame of an alabaster lamp, fills many a home with light and warmth and fragrance. It is the carpet, soft and deep, which whilst it diffuses a look of ample comfort, deadens many a creaking sound. . . . It is the pillow on which sickness lays its head and forgets half its misery, and to which death comes in a balmier dream. It is considerateness. It is tenderness of feeling. It is warmth of affec-



tion. It is promptitude of sympathy. It is love in all its depths and all its delicacy.”<sup>1</sup>

Be gentle. This does not mean that you are to surrender your independence. Gentleness is not effeminacy. It is not softness, mushiness. It consists of strength; and so be manly also. Do n't degenerate into a fop. Do n't allow custom and formality to dry up all the juices of your individuality. Be a vigorous, courageous, outspoken, self-reliant man. You can never make a gentleman unless you have a *man* to make him out of.

4. *Let all kinds of alcoholic drinks severely alone.* Be abstemious. It were safer to be a total abstainer. This will subject you to a certain amount of ridicule, from small souls; but a man won't mind this. Learn to say, “No.” The young man whom society needs, is the man with the courage of his convictions, who would rather be true to himself than be a “Beau Brummel;” who will consent to be singular, provided he is right. Make this sort of contribution to society and you will bless society and society will bless you.

We are hastening on, young men, to the greatest social event of all the seasons, and of all the ages. There was a marriage at Cana

<sup>1</sup> Dr. J. Hamilton.

of Galilee, and Jesus was there ; but there is to be another marriage feast that will eclipse the one at Cana. It is the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb," and He who was guest at Cana will be host here. The joys and delights of this feast will be without alloy. The gladness will be sanctified. Good-will and brotherly-kindness will be supreme. It will be heaven to be there. And the invitations to this marriage feast have been sent out. They have reached even us, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." Will you be there? It will not matter much if our social life here has been humble and barren, if only we shall stand at last in the glorious beauty of that peerless feast.

Should not our social gatherings here be, in some sense, preparations for that great, glad event? That they may be, He who is to be the Bridegroom there, must at least be a guest here. I mean that society must be brought into harmony with the life and will of Jesus Christ.

Society changes. It is barbarous, and becomes civilized. It is illiterate, and becomes scientific. It is rude, and becomes the patron of art and letters. But this does not make it better. Society needs to be regenerated. It



needs to be Christianized. There lies its only hope. Jesus has laid down the law by which alone society can rise to something higher. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."<sup>1</sup>

Let us send for the divine Guest from Nazareth. Let us see his gracious form in our homes, around our firesides. Let us catch upon our faces the beauty of his unselfishness. Let our festivities be sweetened and suffused with Christian joy. Then will social life give all that the human heart hungers for; and we shall find how the Christ-guest can do, over and over again, for us, just what he did at Cana's marriage-feast — the water shall be changed to wine.

"Dear Friend, whose presence in the house,  
Whose gracious words benign,  
Could once at Cana's wedding feast,  
Change water into wine.

"Come, visit us! and when dull work  
Grows weary, line on line,  
Revive our souls, and let us see  
Life's water turned to wine.

"Gay mirth shall deepen into joy,  
Earth's hopes grow half divine,  
When Jesus visits us to make  
Life's water glow as wine.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 7:12.

"The social talk, the evening fire,  
The homely household shrine,  
Grow bright with angel visits when  
The Lord pours out the wine.

"For when self-seeking turns to love,  
Not knowing mine nor thine,  
The miracle again is wrought,  
And water turned to wine." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. F. Clarke.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE YOUNG MAN IN POLITICS.

*"Our citizenship is in heaven." Phil. 3: 20.*

THE young man in politics! What do we mean by that? Is it the young man in the defilement and corruption of a degenerate and polluted politics that worships no god but the party? Is it the young man lending himself to what passes nowadays under the name of "practical politics"? If so, the advice of this chapter might be summed up in a single sentence. Let the young man steer clear of politics. Let him shun carefully this "black hole of Calcutta."

But the word "politics" has a nobler meaning. It is our attitude to the State. It is our activity in civil affairs. Let it therefore stand, not for the ward meeting, nor the packed convention, nor the fraudulent ballot; but let it stand for CITIZENSHIP.

The young man has a duty to perform in the sphere of business. Let him discharge it

in the fear of God. The young man has a part to play in social life. Let it be discharged in the spirit of Jesus. The young man owes a duty to the State. Let him pay it as a citizen of Christ's kingdom. The divine teaching for this side of your life, you can find, young man, in the opening clause of the twentieth verse of the third chapter of Philip-pians. "Our conversation is in heaven." The word translated "conversation," means conversation, but that is its least frequent meaning. It also means "citizenship," and this is the rendering that is given in the Re-vised Version. The word also means "com-monwealth," but we have not quite gotten to its heart yet. The Greek word is *πολιτευμα*, and is the very root from which comes our English word, "politics." So that we might read it thus : "Our politics is in heaven."

There are two great truths voiced in that line of scripture : —

1. *We should get the guiding principles of our politics from heaven.*
2. *Our politics, our citizenship, should be in heaven.*

Most of what I want to say to you in this chapter will fall under the first of these propo-sitions.



## I.

The church and politics! Whenever those two come within arm's reach of each other, a great many good people have the cold shivers. They believe that the church and politics ought never to touch. They are utterly and forever irreconcilable.

We have settled it once for all, in America at any rate, that the church and the state must be separate. We will not brook any interference of the civil power with our religious life; and the instant any ecclesiastic attempts to control our legislation, American citizenship stands up and thunders, "Hands off." In this we are undoubtedly right.

For the state to usurp the functions of the church would be disastrous. King Uzziah had a little prosperity; that inflated him and he determined to try his hand at the priesthood. So he went into the temple and tried to usurp the functions of the priests, and God smote him with leprosy. "And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death."<sup>1</sup> It is a picture of what takes place whenever the state encroaches upon the church. It loses its health, it becomes corrupt and impure. It

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. 26: 21.

ceases to be a blessing to the people for whose peace and prosperity it was created.

On the other hand, for the church to usurp the functions of the state would be equally disastrous. In his Apocalyptic vision, St. John saw a great star fall from heaven, dimmed and burning with the dull blaze of a lamp. Falling upon the rivers and fountains, they were embittered and became as wormwood, and many men drinking thereof, died. "And the name of the star is called wormwood."<sup>1</sup>

The wormwood star of the Apocalypse is a picture of the church falling from its high spiritual sphere, where God had placed it to shine as a luminary ; and intermeddling with the affairs of human government, it is changed from a blessing into a curse. We cannot legislate men into the kingdom of God. After we have passed all the moral legislation that reformers suggest, there remains as much need as ever for the saving blood of Jesus Christ, and the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost. We are daft sometimes over the enactment of a moral statute, and grow impatient with the church for failing to take sides in a political contest when a moral issue is in-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. 8 : 11.



volved, forgetting that the instant the church substitutes secular for spiritual power, she becomes a fallen orb and blights rather than blesses human society. The church is a bulwark to good government so long as it has nothing to do directly with government, but the moment it attempts to influence and control legislation, it is imbued with the worldly spirit, and growing intolerant and grossly material, is shorn of its power.

Therefore let our citizenship ever stand for the absolute separation of church and state. The pope at Rome may, if he pleases, dictate to good Catholics in matters of religion, but good Catholics who are true American citizens, will join with good Protestants in protesting against all interference in the affairs of state.

And yet this is very far from saying that citizenship should be godless. Our ideas on this subject are often obscured because we do not make sharp distinctions.

The church is an institution, an organization; and the state is an organization. As organizations, they are not to interfere with each other. A threshing machine and a locomotive cannot occupy the same ground. If they come together, there will be a wreck.

These two organizations, the one ecclesiastical and the other civil, cannot collide without damage to both.

On the other hand, religion is a life and citizenship is a life. Indeed they are just different phases of the experience of one and the self-same individual. Religion is the man's life toward God, and citizenship is the same man's life toward the state. Therefore religion and citizenship not only ought not to be, but cannot be divorced. Our religion ought to influence our citizenship, and will, if we have much religion. Our citizenship can influence our religion, and does whether we admit it or not.

That there must be some common meeting place for the civil and religious is evident from a great many considerations. God holds governments responsible. "The wages of sin is death," is a law for a nation no less than for individuals. It is the duty of the government to protect the rights and promote the welfare of its subjects. This it can only do by establishing truth and maintaining equity. Obedience to law is grounded ultimately on faith in some supreme being; so that the very life of government and all its beneficent mission rest at last upon the religious instinct.



To say that a nation must be godless to keep from being sectarian is only to utter a fallacy. The Sabbath is not a sectarian day. The Bible is not a sectarian book. The Lord Jesus Christ is not a sectarian Saviour. The state can be Christian without being Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or Episcopalian. The State can be religious without being Protestant or Roman Catholic. To hold that a government cannot find the true religion, and must therefore reject all, is only to make infidelity the religion of the state. While the machinery of government cannot accept Christ, the rulers can, and good rulers are the ministers of God. "Rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil."<sup>1</sup>

They asked Jesus: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?"<sup>2</sup> They hoped to entrap him. If he said, "Yes," he would be false to the Jewish Church. If he said, "No," he would be false to the Roman government. He extricated himself with that matchless answer: "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." Both duties were binding, and they were serving God in discharging their obligations to the Roman gov-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 13 : 3.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 22 : 17.

ernment no less than when performing their vows to the Jewish church. Yes, the civil and the spiritual are to touch and intermingle, but not through the state and church, not through organizations. They are to find each other inside the life of the individual. Citizenship is to be suffused, controlled, crowned by religion. The guiding principles of our politics are to be gotten from heaven. WE ARE TO SERVE THE STATE IN THE FEAR OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

One of the great needs of the time is to bring civil life under the sway of an enlightened Christian conscience. In the reaction against the union of church and state, the pendulum has swung too far. Political life will never be reformed until it is regenerated. God must touch it through the citizenship of men who have been closeted with Jesus Christ, and who serve their country through faith in him.

May I beg the young men who read this to rise above the domination of party pride, to emancipate themselves from the bondage of partisanship; and to consider their citizenship, not in the light of their allegiance to any political party whatsoever, but in the light of their allegiance to the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ.



American citizenship is a privilege. God in a peculiar manner has in these last times, raised up our nation, and given it a pre-eminent place among the peoples of the earth. Its resources are exhaustless, its position is strategic. The Anglo-Saxon race is the dominant race. Within the last century, the English-speaking people have stepped from the fifth up to the first place among the civilized nations. Dr. Josiah Strong gives us this table :<sup>1</sup>—

1801.

| RANK | LANGUAGE        | NUMBER<br>SPOKEN BY | PER CENT |
|------|-----------------|---------------------|----------|
| 1    | French.....     | 31,450,000          | 19.4     |
| 2    | Russian.....    | 30,770,000          | 19.0     |
| 3    | German.....     | 30,320,000          | 18.7     |
| 4    | Spanish.....    | 26,190,000          | 16.2     |
| 5    | English.....    | 20,520,000          | 12.7     |
| 6    | Italian.....    | 15,070,000          | 9.3      |
| 7    | Portuguese..... | 7,480,000           | 4.7      |

1890.

| RANK | LANGUAGE        | NUMBER<br>SPOKEN BY | PER CENT |
|------|-----------------|---------------------|----------|
| 1    | English.....    | 111,100,000         | 27.7     |
| 2    | German.....     | 75,200,000          | 18.7     |
| 3    | Russian.....    | 75,090,000          | 18.7     |
| 4    | French.....     | 51,200,000          | 12.7     |
| 5    | Spanish.....    | 42,800,000          | 10.7     |
| 6    | Italian.....    | 33,400,000          | 8.3      |
| 7    | Portuguese..... | 13,000,000          | 3.2      |

<sup>1</sup> "New Era," p. 62.

The Anglo-Saxon race will probably dominate the earth and determine, under God, the destiny of mankind. The home of the race will be this Western Republic. In the hand of American citizenship, God places the glorious achievements of the past, the results of all the battles fought for human rights; and that hand holds the destiny of the race. All that, a young man wields, when he attains his majority and becomes a citizen of the United States. It is a magnificent privilege. It is also an awful responsibility.

There is an old English picture<sup>1</sup> that represents a king wearing his crown, and underneath is the inscription: "I govern all." By his side is a bishop arrayed in ecclesiastical vestments, and beneath, "I pray for all." By his side is a soldier clad in full uniform, and beneath, "I fight for all." By his side is a farmer who reluctantly draws his purse and ruefully exclaims, "I pay for all." The American citizen combines all four. He rules, prays, fights for himself, and pays all expenses. Yea, more, he must answer for it all. Our legislators and judges are, after all, only the representatives of the people. If

<sup>1</sup> This picture is from the Roslyn Fresco in Roslyn Chapel, Roslyn, Scotland.



there are bad laws, it is because some bad law-makers represent a bad constituency. The burden of responsibility impinges at last upon the individual voter, and he cannot rid himself of it. To refuse to vote is only to cast half a ballot for the crowd that wins.

Perhaps some one may wonder why the youths are addressed on this subject. Many of them cannot even vote, and it must be years before they can hope to dominate politics with a new policy. Very well; all things come to those who wait. Men get their life-principles when they are young. If we can throw into political life a generation of enthusiastic and courageous youths, with lofty ideals of citizenship and determined to exercise the same in the fear of God, the battle for clean and honest government will be won by and by.

Patriotism is dying out. Even the sentiment is the butt of ridicule for the "practical politician." The iniquitous and sordid lust for office is quenching nobler impulses. The cursed spoils system has its octopus-grip on politics. Many good men will not even stand for office. They are unwilling to subject their reputation to the malignant flings of political envy. They are unwilling to stoop to the

means and methods by which elections are carried. Not a few have lost heart. The older men, by repeated failures in the effort to bring about reforms, have become discouraged. They regard the task as hopeless. There is needed the presumptuous daring of youth to win this fight. The young men must be the Hercules to cleanse the Augean stable of modern politics.

And so it is well for a young man, as early as possible, to feel the responsibilities of citizenship, even though he may not immediately exercise all of its privileges. That he do this for the weal of his state and country, I would suggest the following as guiding principles to the discharge of his duties to the state : —

1. *Keep posted on public questions.* Study carefully the great economic problems that agitate the public mind and come before the country for settlement. Have intelligent views on all matters that confront citizenship. It is only thus that the reign of the partisan and professional politician can be overthrown. The death of ignorance will be the doom of demagoguery.

2. *Let the young man obey the laws of the land.* Good citizenship presupposes good manners. There are laws against profanity



and Sabbath-breaking. No blasphemer or Sabbath-breaker can be a good citizen, it matters not how he may vote. The truth is, citizenship is not comprised in the casting of a ballot. It matters not how much political influence a man may have, nor how many votes he may be able to tie to the party machine, if he breaks the laws, he is an enemy to the state, and a menace to the community.

Magistrates and policemen are made necessary by violators of the law. There is such a thing as living so peaceably that these officers shall not be needed. A regiment was ordered to capture a small village in the Tyrol. The town was peopled by a colony that did not believe in war. Tidings came that the army was on the march, but the peaceful villagers only said, "If they will take us, they must." Soon the soldiers came marching in to the shrill music of the fifes, but a strange scene met their eyes. Yonder the farmer was at his plow, there the blacksmith was at his anvil, here the women were at their churns and spinning-wheels. The babies crowed to hear the music, and the children ran into the streets to see the gay uniforms of the soldiers. "Where are your soldiers?" was asked. "We have none," they replied. "But

we have come to take the town." "Well, friends, it lies before you." "But is there nobody to fight?" "No one." Here was something the books on war had not provided for. The village was absolutely bullet-proof. It was impossible to capture a town like that.

The ideal condition will be reached when man will regard the rights of his neighbor so well, when all will keep Christ's golden rule of Christian neighborhood so perfectly, that we shall no longer need policemen and criminal courts and jails. It seems a long way off now, but every citizen who keeps the laws of the land is contributing thereto a citizenship that will be potent in changing the ideal into the real.

3. *Vote.* Exercise the right of franchise. Cast your ballot when election day comes around. If the privileges of American citizenship were worth purchasing with blood, they are surely worth preserving with a ballot. Evil wins on election day, because, too often, the good men in the community do not take the trouble to vote. Some one has said that a wet election day means a rum victory in New York City.

Let the young man understand the value of his right to vote, and exercise that right. We Americans are queer people. We are the



greatest sticklers in the world for our rights when any one attempts to interfere with them. But given peaceable possession thereof, and we treat them with woful neglect ourselves. If it were seriously threatened that the English Parliament should select the next president of the United States, there would be such a righteous uprising of indignant American citizens, as would utterly pale the patriotic pyrotechnics of revolutionary days. And yet thousands of these same American citizens will stay comfortably at home or contentedly at business, and allow a foreign-born and an illiterate population to determine who shall be the next president.

Vote. God will hold you responsible for it. The man or the machine who cheats you out of it, is a worse thief than he who robs your safe.

4. *Let your citizenship be controlled by conscience.* Vote your best convictions, let come what will. Do n't have two codes, one for the sanctuary and another for the polls. "What is morally wrong can never be politically right." Pray God for a Christianity that will lead you to do more than sing psalms and make prayers and go to church. Let your religion go down to the roots, and be

more concerned with voting right than with carrying an election. Do n't let your religion and your citizenship contradict each other. The future of the world is not determined by the result of a single election. You are doing more for America when you are in the minority voting right, than when you are with the majority voting wrong. God wants some citizens in every State who will follow conscience, let the results be what they may.

“Take, then, no thought for aught save truth and right,  
Content, if such thy fate, to die obscure ;  
Youth fails and honors ; fame may not endure,  
And loftier souls soon weary of delight.

“Keep innocence ; be all a true man ought ;  
Let neither pleasure tempt, nor pain appall ;  
Who hath this, he hath all things, having naught ;  
Who hath it not, hath nothing, having all.”

It is not yet sufficiently demonstrated that our American nation is here to stay. We brag much about its greatness ; but its permanence, its perpetuity, must rest on a more solid basis than Fourth of July orators. If the young men of our country will give such a citizenship as I have been describing, to our politics, they will have done much toward establishing and perpetuating American institutions.



## II.

There is a second truth, I said, contained in the verse of scripture cited at the beginning of this chapter. Not only should we get the guiding principles of our politics from heaven ; but our politics, OUR CITIZENSHIP SHOULD BE IN HEAVEN.

There is another commonwealth. It is that of God's grace. There is another government. It is the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let the young man have a citizenship in that.

This citizenship in heaven is precious. It has been purchased with the blood of Calvary's cross. Its honors are the highest, its rights the most royal, its liberty the finest. To be a citizen of that commonwealth is to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.

It would be a loss, but not the greatest, to be deprived of our citizenship on earth ; but to fail of this heavenly citizenship would be loss irreparable. As we live out our little span of time, we are using up our citizenship here, but we are only entering more and more fully upon the enjoyment of our citizenship on high. The two citizenships ought to har-

monize. The earthly should be crowned, glorified, with the heavenly.

It is God's purpose, as the years go by, for this heavenly commonwealth to absorb all others. It alone is the ideal state. As mankind comes to know God better, comes to do his will more perfectly, human governments are merging into the divine, human sovereigns are laying their scepters at the feet of King Jesus, until at last the barriers that divide monarchies, republics, empires, shall all fade away; the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; the holy city, New Jerusalem, shall come down from God out of heaven, bringing heaven in its sweetness and full glory to our earth; and a redeemed humanity shall join in hymning "coronation" to Christ Omnipotent.

That is the vision of Christian seers. It is the golden goal of Christianity. When it will be realized, God only knows; but every man whose earthly citizenship has caught upon it the celestial beauty of the heavenly, is hastening the coming of that great time.

It is said that a brave British officer<sup>1</sup> led his regiment through the darkness of night,

<sup>1</sup> This officer was H. Burnaby, author of "Ride to Khiva." He died at Tel el Kebir, under Sir Garnet Wolseley.



over a dreary trackless waste, guided only by one bright star on which he kept his eye steadily fixed. In the gray dawn of the next morning when the battle was joined, he was the first to fall, mortally wounded. As his superior officer leaned over him, the dying man's brow was mantled with a blush of pride, as he said, "Didn't I guide them straight, sir?"

"Our politics is in heaven." There is the bright star by which we may find our way through the doubts and perplexities of our earthly citizenship. And, my brothers in the church, my comrades in the state, when at last we stand in the presence of the Supreme Ruler to render our account, to explain the influence and example of the life that is behind us, may it be ours to look up into the face of the Great King, and say, "Did n't I guide them straight?"

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE YOUNG MAN IN RELIGION.

*"And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe." Mark 16:5.*

THE first Easter morning had dawned upon the earth. Christianity at last was demonstrated to be divine. Until now all had been uncertainty, suspense. Had Christ never come back from the tomb, the gospel would have been probable; nothing more. But Christ has arisen, and the seal of divinity has been put on all that he ever said or did.

The devout women have come in the gray dawn of that Easter morning to perform their deed of love. They bring frankincense and myrrh to anoint the body of their Master. Their gift has been consecrated by a Sabbath day's rest. They have come timorously, distrustingly; they have come to be disappointed, amazed, enraptured. The stone has been rolled away from the mouth of the sepulcher, and as they peer through the open



mouth of the tomb, down into its twilight, they are startled. The body of Jesus is gone ! In place thereof they behold an angel.

“And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe ; and they were amazed. And he saith unto them, Be not amazed ; ye seek Jesus the Nazarene, which hath been crucified ; he is risen ; he is not here ; behold, the place where they laid him !” What did it all mean ? It was one of the birth-hours of the world. Prophecies were being fulfilled with the rapidity of lightning. Events, trivial in themselves, had in them the significance of all the ages. What was the meaning of that immortal youth, from the celestial land, clad in spotless white, and proclaiming to bewildered mortals the first tidings of a resurrected Christ ! It meant much.

It meant to proclaim the immortal youth, the eternal vigor of the gospel. The story of Christ's love would never grow nerveless and tame, would never lose its grasp and freshness. Centuries have gone by since then, and the gospel of the Nazarene is still as strong and robust as in its pristine youth. O “Gospel of the glory of the blessed God,” —

"... from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth."<sup>1</sup>

The vision meant also to proclaim the whiteness of the life made clean in the blood of Jesus. The young man arrayed in a white robe was a picture of the believer clad in the white robe of the saints, wrapt 'round with the spotless mantle of Christ's faultless righteousness. The purest deeds, the cleanest living, the most irreproachable conduct have ever been that whose key-note was struck in the life of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore I think the vision was intended to teach us that Christianity is a religion of gladness and delight; that it does not quench the bounding spirits and buoyant joy that thrills the young. One can have upon him the glow and elasticity of youth, and still be loyal to Jesus, and devout enough to stand in the tomb where the Lord lay. The gospel does not create long faces, and funeral tones. It does not put old heads on young shoulders. It does not shrivel the marrow in our bones nor dry up the juices in our flesh. It harmonizes with all the glad songs of youth.

But in addition to all this, I think the young man, waiting in the empty tomb of

<sup>1</sup>Ps. 110:3.



Joseph of Arimathea, and making the glow of the Easter dawn radiant with the tidings that Jesus had arisen from the dead, was proclaiming the attitude which God would have young men occupy toward the gospel in every age. The first herald of the risen Christ was not a woman but a man, and not an old man but a young man. Christ would have young men proclaim him to the world, and the fittest herald of the cross is a young man. And so right at the beginning of Christianity as a divinely authenticated system, right in the sepulcher which had witnessed Christ's profoundest humiliation and sublimest victory, we have the theme of this chapter :—

#### THE YOUNG MAN IN RELIGION.

In the previous chapters, I have written of the other sides of a young man's life,—the young man in business, which is his work-day life ; the young man in society, which is his play-day life ; the young man in politics, which is his citizenship life. And now I come to that which is more important than any,—the crown of all,—the young man in religion, which is his immortal life.

And yet, perhaps nowhere else are we so careless, so utterly unmindful of results, as in

that which pertains to our religious experience. It was a pertinent question which a little boy asked, when climbing upon his father's knee. He said: "Papa, is your soul insured?" "Why do you ask, my son?" "Because I heard uncle George say that you had your house insured, and your life insured, but he did not believe that you thought of your soul, and he was afraid you would lose it. Can't you get it insured right away?"

The child fired a center-shot. We insure our houses, and we insure our goods, and we insure our cargoes, and we insure our lives,—we even insure our horses and dogs; but when it comes to our souls, the immortal part, we are strangely and culpably neglectful. And yet, if God is true, the soul is immeasurably more precious than all the rest.

I care not how successful you may be in business,—you may amass a fortune, you may become a wizard of Wall street, and have the world's markets for your key-board; I care not how brilliant you may be in society,—you may be courted and flattered, you may be sought after for your social charms and graces; I care not how fortunate you may be in politics,—you may have your highest ambitions gratified, and be preferred to offi-



cial dignity above your fellows ; still if you are irreligious, if you are godless, if you have shut the divine out of your life, there is a grave and mighty blemish on your being, you are still unfinished, incomplete. Only those who reach up to God through Christ can ever attain unto the full stature of a perfect manhood.

Our religion gives character and direction to every other phase of our being. Religious conviction is the substratum of character. If those convictions are weak, loosely formed, the whole character will be tottering and unsteady.

It matters not how well a gun may be loaded, if it is pointed in the wrong direction, it is useless, possibly worse. It matters not how well a human life may be furnished, if it is misdirected, it is forceless. Religion gives life aim, right direction. It was General Jackson's piety that dominated and directed his superb military genius. The same may be said of Oliver Cromwell.

I once saw a row of buildings tottering to ruin. They were of comparatively recent construction. The architecture was rather pretentious, the materials,— sand-stone, and brick,— good enough, but the foundation was defective. It was near an inlet of the sea that

the buildings had been erected, and piling was necessary to give a good foundation. This had been omitted, and the buildings went to ruin, and have since been torn down, the cracked and leaning walls having become a menace to every passer-by.

On inquiry I found that the buildings had been erected by a Catholic priest, and I could not help wondering whether his views on religion had not unconsciously shaped his views as to the construction of houses. His faith, which makes much of works of merit and prayers to the Virgin and the saints, which sometimes forgets that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ,"<sup>1</sup>—this faith gives more heed to the superstructure than to the substructure; and what more natural, when he tries his hand at building houses, than for him to follow his creed, and slight the foundation?

"Religion is the chief concern  
Of mortals here below,"—

for it influences, more or less, the whole man.

Young men are prone to neglect religion; more so, perhaps, than any other class. There are between seven and eight million young men in the United States. It is de-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 3 : 11.



clared by statisticians that, on an average, only twenty-five out of every one hundred young men attend church. Where are the other seventy-five?—On the streets, in the saloons, in the parks, anywhere save where God's voice can be heard, and his Christ be found.

It is also stated that, of the young men in this country, "95 per cent do not belong to church; 97 per cent do nothing for the church; 70 per cent of our incarcerated criminals are young men; 90 per cent (nearly) of all crimes are committed by young men; 85 per cent of the patrons of saloons and bagnios are young men." I do not vouch for the absolute accuracy of these figures, but they must be approximately correct. What a fearful indictment do they present against the young manhood of America!

Young men pass through a stage of what we may call "adolescent or school-boy skepticism." It marks the dawn of independent thought, when the youth has an idea that he is a little more of a man for saying: "I have my honest doubts." He is rather proud of the achievement of calling in question the old-fashioned faiths of his ancestors, and he has a

notion that what he has once been called to question, is for that reason, forever after unworthy of unquestioning confidence.

Now, young men, we may as well set it down once for all that skepticism is weakness, not strength; and that a doubt instead of being something to boast of is something to be ashamed of and deplore.

“It was Goethe who cried out in despair, ‘Give us your convictions. As for doubts, we have enough of them already.’” No better advice has been given to the skeptical young man than that clear word of Dr. Charles F. Deems, “Believe your beliefs and doubt your doubts. Do not make the common mistake of skeptics, doubting your beliefs and believing your doubts.” Bishop Whittle of the Diocese of Virginia, tells of an interview that he once had with a thoughtful scholar, who said that he had read every book he could find that assailed Jesus Christ. And said the man: “I should long since have become an infidel, but for three things:—

“First, I am a man. I am going somewhere. To-night I am a day nearer the grave than I was last night. I have read all such books can tell me. They shed not one



solitary ray of hope or light upon the darkness. They shall not take away the guide and leave me stone blind.

"Secondly, I had a mother. I saw her go down into the dark valley where I am going, and she leaned on an unseen arm as calmly as a child goes to sleep on its mother's breast. I knew that she was not deceived.

"Thirdly, I have three motherless daughters, They have no protector but myself. I would rather kill them than leave them in this sinful world, if you blot out from it all the teachings of the gospel."

Young men, *these* are not theories, these are not empty platitudes, glittering generalities, vague abstractions. They are the most intensely practical problems of life, and before such considerations, your school-boy skepticism vanishes, like mists before a majestic sunrise.

If you have honest doubts on questions connected with religion, the remedy for your doubt is not argument. That will only confirm you in your delusion. The best cure for religious doubts is a Christian experience.

A young man came to see me one day, and wanted to talk on the subject of religion. He began by saying: "I can't believe certain

portions of the Bible. I'd like to be religious, but I have doubts about some of the miracles, especially Jonah and the whale, and the Gadarene swine." I said: "Do you feel yourself to be a lost sinner without Christ?" "No, I cannot say that I do." "Well, my dear fellow, it will do no good to argue with you about these miracles. That will settle nothing, but if you are genuinely converted, the doubts will disappear of themselves." Three months later he came back, his face aglow with joy, and said: "I have only come to tell you that God has saved me, and my doubts are all gone." A Christian experience had accomplished what argument could never have done. That is Christ's plan of settling doubts. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself."<sup>1</sup>

A great poet was once asked if he could prove the divine character of Christianity with a single argument, and he replied, "Yes, try it." Let the young man give religion an honest trial. That is but a fair demand. That is all God asks; and with God be the rest. That will bring the young man and the gospel together. The chasm will be closed, and we shall have the young man in religion.

<sup>1</sup>John 7:17.



Let us look at this subject from two stand-points : —

1. *The young man needs religion.*
2. *Religion needs the young man.*

I.

The young man needs religion. Why? — For many reasons. He needs it that he may make the best of both worlds. There are two worlds, the now and the hereafter, the temporal and the eternal. We want to possess ourselves of both. It is poor policy to forfeit the next world in order to have a good time in this; and it is poor religion to ruin this world in order to gain the next. It is a diseased piety that projects all happiness beyond the graveyard, and makes all hope revolve around the cemetery. God is the God of both worlds. He can be found in each, and he would have his creatures make the best of both. How? — By serving him. It is only through Christ that we can possess ourselves of the joys and powers of the world to come; and it is only as we follow the pattern which he set us while he lived incarnate on the earth, that we can attain contentment and true dignity of life in the world that is now.

We need to open our hearts to religious influences while we are young, because youth is the impressionable period of life. There is a moment in the history of the plaster cast when it is responsive to the slightest influence, and the lightest touch leaves its impression; but that moment past, to change the cast, it must be broken. It is very much that way in character formation. In youth, we are sensitive, easily impressed. The life is taking shape, and it is of supreme importance that God have a hand in the making of the man.

The young man needs religion that he may have strength to resist the innumerable temptations that beset him. There is no other class subjected to such insidious, seductive, persistent, and damning temptations; and subjected under conditions and at an age when it is hardest to resist. It is not necessary to go to grog-shops and bagnios to find these temptations. The devil's work is carried on in many a counting-room, in many a parlor. The devil's snares are set for the unwary feet of young men by those of whom better things might be expected. You are tempted to stifle your conscience, to falsify accounts, to misrepresent, and your position



is the bribe for which you are asked to sell your honor. The voice of a companion, a fellow-clerk, says: "Come go with us to-night. Don't be so prosy. Let's have a gay time. No one will ever know it." The young man who resists all these, and keeps himself unsullied must have faith in God.

The young man that comes fresh from a country life into the rush and sin of the average American city will be almost inevitably sucked down into the cesspool of vice and dissipation unless he be girded about with strong religious convictions. We are all familiar with such instances. A young man comes from the quiet and seclusion of a country home, to take a position with some business firm. He is quick, energetic, full of force and fire, industrious; and the older business men begin to notice him, and they say, "Young Jones is going to succeed. He has a bright future. He will be heard from." The months go by and the young man disappears. What is the trouble? Some one inquires after him, and the reply is: "O, he fell in with a gay set. He became too fast. His salary was overdrawn, his work neglected. He got his walking papers one morning, and has gone back to the country to reflect." That or something worse.

Now, it will not do for you to try to excuse yourself after you have fallen. It won't do for you to plead the baby act, as Eve did, and say, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."<sup>1</sup> It avails nothing for you to plead: "I was tempted. I was over-persuaded." Where was your will power? Where was your individuality? Where was your manhood? Nobody forced you, nobody compelled you. You were tempted, I grant, but who made you yield to temptation? It was your own free act, and you can never amount to much until you learn to control yourself.

Nearly all young men expect to be great some day. They have different ideas as to the way this ambition is to be realized. Some would be scholars, some statesmen, some inventors, some painters, some men of affairs. There is however a *sine qua non* to any sort of greatness. It is the mastery of self. No man has ever yet been truly great who had not first acquired the mastery over himself; and whatever else he may fail of, he is already truly great who has won this victory. "He that ruleth his spirit, is better than he that taketh a city."<sup>2</sup>

For all this the young man needs religion. He needs faith in Jesus Christ. He needs the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 3 : 13.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. 16 : 32.



moorings of religious convictions. He needs all the vacuum within filled with God's truth, until evil can find no place to enter. He needs some of that sublime strength of character which enabled Joseph, Nehemiah, Daniel to stand unshaken when swept by the fiercest storms of temptation. He needs to be so finished out by God that he can ever stand "foursquare to all the winds that blow."

He needs to be something more than religious. It does not count for much to go through religious performances, to have religious associations touch you on the outside. They must fill you, flood you, saturate you. "It is not worth while being religious" says Prof. Henry Drummond, "unless you are altogether religious. It won't do to be merely playing at religion, or having religion on us as a bit of veneer. It must saturate us. Some seek first the kingdom of God. Others put it in a second place. Then prayer-meetings are dull, and fellowship gatherings are uninteresting. But the moment a man begins to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all things are right. Any man who has not heartily thrown himself into the kingdom of God, but who is seeking secondly the kingdom of God, may be religious; but there is

something he loves more, and both worlds are spoiled to him. He has neither the cream of the one, nor of the other. The great desideratum of the present day is not more Christians, but a better brand of them."

Young men, dare to be religious, in the finest, loftiest, grandest meaning of that word. Do n't allow yourselves to be laughed out of your reverence for the word of God and the piety of your father and mother. Do n't consider it a disgrace to be called "good." Do n't be coaxed and wheedled and seduced into forbidden sins. Have some courage. If you can do no more, do as Luther did at the Diet of Worms, when he said, "Here I stand, I can do naught else. God help me. Amen!"

The gospel is in sympathy with young men. That scene at the tomb of Jesus settles that. Therefore have a stout heart, and dare to be religious.

What sort of religion are you to strive for? There are many brands. Let yours be a manly religion. Do n't let it degenerate into cant. Do n't let it melt down into mushy sentimentalism. Do n't let it die away into a starveling rite, the naked bones of formalism and ritual. Do n't let it lapse into a



moss-grown, mildewed theology. Let it be sincere and straightforward. Let it be clear-cut and stalwart. Let it be sympathetic and tender. Let it be fine-grained and broad-brained. Let it be rich, full, free, divine.

Dr. James Stalker has given us three fine summaries of "a young man's religion : " —

1. Not a creed, but an experience.
2. Not a restraint, but an inspiration.
3. Not an insurance for the next, but a program for the present world.

Take these as in some sense a guide to what you are to strive for in religion. Study God's word much, and pray. Keep your mind free to every wind that blows, while your faith abides unwavering in Jesus Christ. This will bring the young man what he needs for all the strain and struggle of life,—a manly Christianity.

## II.

Let us now turn the phrase around. Religion needs the young man. Can it be true? Is that more than a pious sentiment? Is there a real, pressing sense in which it may be said that the kingdom of Christ needs the energies of young men?—Yes, a hundred times, yes! Would that young men might hear this call that comes from God; and understand that

God saves us not so much for what we are as for what, by his divine strength and guidance, we may do.

It is God's plan and purpose to redeem the lost world. For this Christ gave his life on the cross. A sacrifice sufficient for all men has been made. But how to bring the finished work of Christ in contact with the lost world—that is the supreme problem in this dispensation wherein we live.

“Christ alone can save the world,

But Christ cannot save the world alone.”

Religion needs young men to help bring the lost world back to God; to form the missing link which shall reunite the broken chain that holds the world to the cross.

The young man, in the tomb, heralding the risen Christ, is a portraiture of the mission Jesus Christ would lay upon young manhood in every age. It is to be the herald of himself to men.

And there are many reasons why young men are especially and pre-eminently fitted for this work. St. John says: “I have written unto you young men because ye are strong.”<sup>1</sup> They have the physical strength, the mental vigor, the freedom, the enthusiasm, the courage, the ardor that has not been dulled by de-

<sup>1</sup>I John 2 : 14.



feat. Young men are "strong" in a score of ways for the work of preaching Christ to a lost world; and while their work only grows more valuable with years and experience, it is undoubtedly from the ranks of the young men that Christ does and must call the heralds of the gospel.

Many a young man is casting about for a life-work. What vocation shall he follow? What department of human labor shall command the powers of his being? Shall it be a clerkship, a trade, a profession? I commend to all such a *CALLING*. Carefully and seriously consider whether God does not call you to preach the gospel to your fellow-men. The professions are crowded, the trades are in sharpest competition, the clerkships are overflowing. With all these the line of success is along the law of the survival of the fittest. There is one vocation where the ranks are not yet full. It is the gospel ministry. Now, as in the olden times, it may be said: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest."<sup>1</sup>

It is the bounden duty of every human being to follow that calling in life by which he can best glorify God. Let him study his gifts

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 9:37, 38.

and his surroundings, and thus, under God's guidance, settle that. We hear profoundly impracticable disquisitions about some mysterious "call of the Spirit," and many a young man is virtually waiting to be roused from slumber, as was the child Samuel, by some audible voice that shall call him into the ministry. That is not the way the call of the Spirit comes in these days. Use your common sense. Let mysterious voices alone. Honestly and squarely confront this question: How can I best glorify God? By a trade? Then be a carpenter. By a profession? Then be a lawyer. By a commercial career? Then go into business. By preaching the gospel? Then enter the ministry.

I would not have you take to preaching because you are a failure at everything else. Nor would I have you enter the ministry merely to get a livelihood. If you do, you will make a dismal failure, and the work itself will be intolerably distasteful.

A Jewish rabbi, who was then selling pianos, once said to me: "I was in charge of such a synagogue for fifteen years." "Why did you give it up?" I asked. "O I got tired of depiziness." No wonder. Any man who regards the ministry as a business, and who is



“in it for what he can get out of it,” will soon grow inexpressibly tired of the business. His life will be a sham, and he must go about wearing a hypocrite’s mask.

On the other hand, entered from the right motives, there is no vocation which brings such joy, such satisfaction, such unsullied ambitions, such lofty ideals and aspirations. If one is not much of a man to start with, and enters the gospel ministry from the right motives, a great man will be made out of him, before many years have gone by. Not great according to the various standards of the world, but great in all those traits of character and deeds of life which alone make men truly great. He lives daily in the presence of the highest ideals, and is tempted ever to strive for the perfect. This lifts him, and he proves that there is such a thing as hitching one’s wagon to a star, until he can kick the earth from beneath his feet.

But I would not have you conclude that one must be a preacher before he can do aught in helping to bring the lost world back to God. Far from it. You can do work like this in any calling, if you will only live Christ. Indeed, after all, that is the way the world is to be changed. “The good seed, these are

the sons of the kingdom."<sup>1</sup> What is chiefly needed is not more churches and more preachers, but more "sons of the kingdom," more men with the kingdom of God within them, who shall go down into the lost world, among its children, and patiently, earnestly, lovingly live the Christ-life over again. That will change the world, and that you can do, it matters not what your vocation.

In the last few decades, God has been stirring the hearts of the young, as never before, to take a more active part in this blessed work. It is the age of "young people's movements." A phenomenon in the church life of the present is the prolific birth and unprecedented growth of young people's societies. In some instances these societies have enrolled thousands, and in one case more than a million members. With compact, yet flexible organization, with widespread enthusiasm, with sagacious foresight, with a consecration that captures esteem, they plan their work, enter heartily upon personal service, create a distinct literature, send out missionaries, and organize in heathen and pagan lands.

It is the era of Sunday-schools, of the Young Men's Christian Association, of the Students' Volunteer Movement. Young men

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 13 : 38.



are hearkening to the call of religion as never before, and are entering upon its sublime mission. God grant that what we see may be but the beginnings of a great turning to the Lord.

Young men, listen ! Catch the word that comes down from above. Fall into line and march, keeping step with the good of all ages.

The opening chapter had to do with the young man in business ; the closing with the young man in religion. Let us now couple those two words together, BUSINESS and RELIGION.

1. *Our business should have our religion.*  
We should never divorce the secular and spiritual so utterly as to shut our religious convictions clean out of our business. A man should be as good a Christian while selling goods or making contracts on Monday as when taking sacrament on Sunday. Let our business life be swayed by faith in God.

2. *Our religion should have our business.*  
A good man is not necessarily a crank, a fanatic. Faith does not destroy reason. Many a man's religion would be vastly improved, if he would bring it under the sway of the sound, common-sense maxims of business life. This would translate his religion from the

sphere of sentiment into that of practice. It would vitalize his creed, and rid him of a deal of gray moss.

3. *Our religion should be our business.* That is the conclusion of the whole matter. That is the main point of all that I have written. "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."<sup>1</sup> Religion should be the main thing. All else should be secondary, tributary. Mr. Gladstone is reported to have said on one occasion: "Talk about the questions of the day, there is but one question, and that is the gospel. It can and will correct everything that needs correction. All men at the head of great movements are Christian men. During the many years I was in the cabinet, I was brought into association with sixty master minds, and all but five of them were Christians. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind in contact with divine revelation."<sup>2</sup> Religion is the chief thing. Let us make religion our business.

In the eighth Psalm, we are given the portrait of ideal manhood: —

<sup>1</sup> Shorter Catechism, Ques. 1.

<sup>2</sup> To Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D. D., at Hawarden Castle, Jan. 24, 1890.



“What is man, that thou art mindful of him ?  
And the Son of man, that thou visitest him ?  
For thou hast made him but little lower than God,  
And crownest him with glory and honor.  
Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of  
thy hands ;  
Thou hast put all things under his feet.”

Such is what God intended us to be. But alongside of this picture drawn by the Hebrew poet, we place ourselves. By the side of man as he should be, we place man as he is. Beside the portrait of ideal manhood we hang the portrait of real manhood. What a contrast ! The real man is dominated by fear, defiled by lust, sunken in brutal delights, a slave to base passions, the victim of a thousand foes. Manhood is discrowned. Man is fallen.

Well, is there no hope ? Can we never regain what has been lost ? Can we never attain unto that splendid portrait of the Psalmist ? Let us see. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in commenting on this eighth Psalm, says : “ One has somewhere testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him ? Or the Son of man that thou visitest him ? . . . Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 2 : 6-8.

Then the writer continues: "Now we see not yet all things subjected to him. But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even JESUS." Ah, that is the magic name! We see manhood ruined by the fall, but we also see Jesus. There is hope. Jesus is the Redeemer and Restorer of lost and fallen man. We are "complete in him." Real manhood attains to ideal manhood through Jesus. Discrowned manhood is recrowned by Christ.

We behold Jesus! Young man, follow him. Let that be the supreme aim of life, and you will reach the finest destiny.

We are living in a noble age. It was never so good a time to live as it is now. We are possessed of the achievements of all those who have gone before us. We confront the piled-up opportunities of all the ages. Innumerable inventions have dowered human effort with a scope and power, rarely dreamed of in other times. A young man now is a bigger god than was ever Jupiter. He has more power. It is a superb time in which to do a life-work. God challenges us to do our utmost, and thrills us with celestial ambitions. May we not fail!



“A time like this demands  
 Great hearts, strong minds, true faith, and willing hands.  
 Men whom the lust of office does not kill ;  
     Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy ;  
 Men who possess opinions and a will ;  
     Men who have honor ; men who will not lie.”<sup>1</sup>

To be a young man on the right side of the King ; to be clothed in the faultless righteousness of Christ, to get a commission straight from the throne of God, to be crowned unto manhood's completeness by Jesus, and thus to do life's work — that will be to make no failure. It will be to have done some good here. It will be to find a welcome yonder.

“There 's a fount about to stream,  
     There 's a light about to gleam,  
 There 's a midnight darkness changing into day ;  
 Men of thought, and men of action, *CLEAR THE WAY.*”

<sup>1</sup>J. G. Holland.

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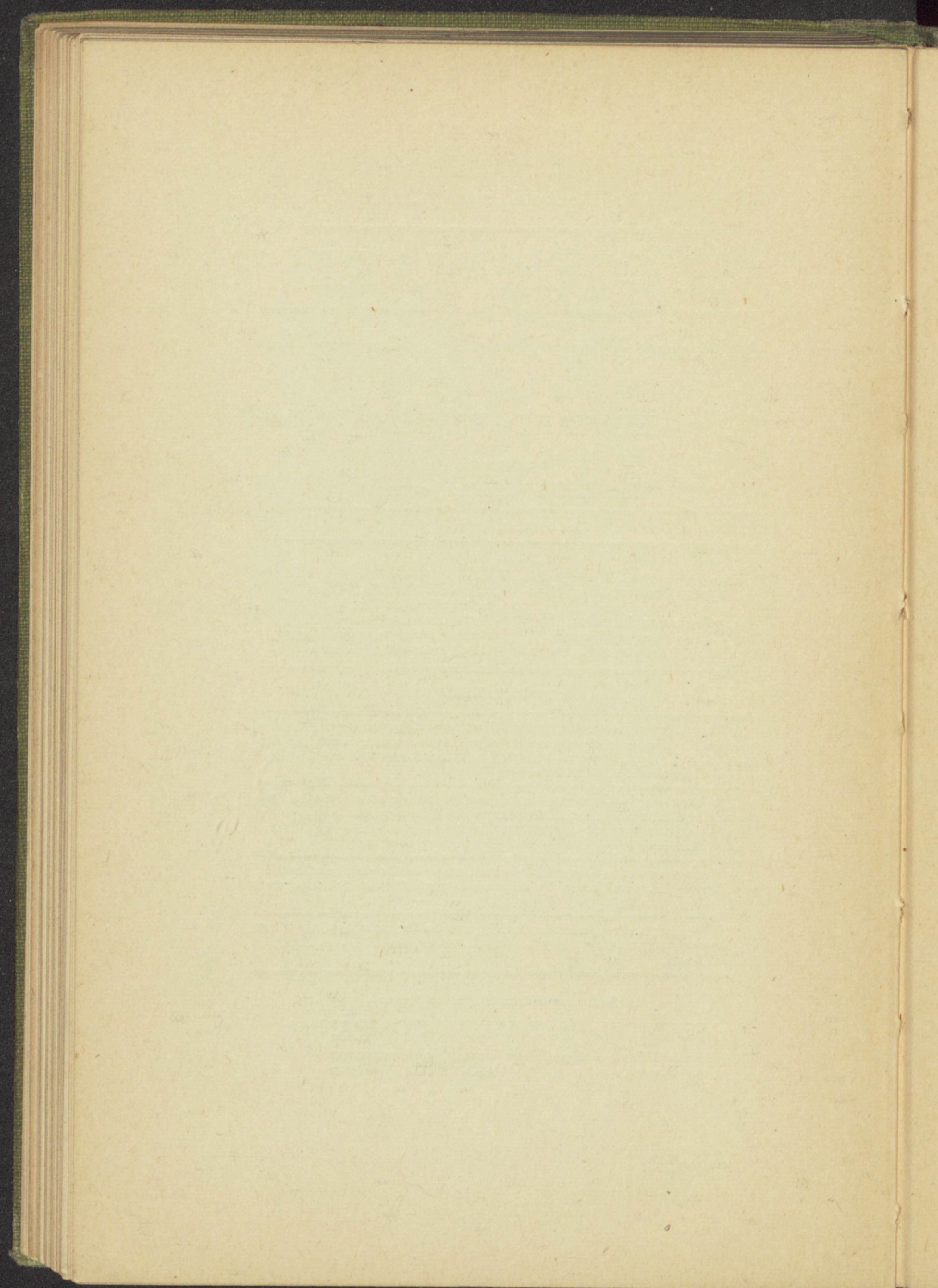
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